WINDIGO PSYCHOSIS: THE ANATOMY OF AN EMIC-ETIC CONFUSION

BY

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Although "windigo psychosis" has served anthropology as a classic example of "culture-bound psychopathology" for almost half a century, five years' field experience among the Northern Algonkian peoples of Canada, extensive archival research, and a critical examination of the voluminous literature on windigo, all indicate that there probably never were any windigo psychotics in an etic and behavioral sense. It is argued that an emic and mentalist bias has limited the abilities of anthropologists to adequately analyze the Algonkian windigo complex.

The dissertation proceeds on the assumption that for almost fifty years the wrong question has been asked. Looking at the windigo phenomenon from the point of view of group sociodynamics rather than from individual psychodynamics reveals that the crucial question is not "what causes a person to become a cannibalistic maniac?" but rather

"under what circumstances is a Northern Algonkian likely to be accused of having become a cannibalistic maniac and thus run the risk of being executed as such?" It is held that the conditions that produced the windigo complex were created or exacerbated by the fur trade. These include faunal depletions, population dislocations, a progressively increasing bondage to a mercantile monopoly, devastations by European diseases, and a counterintuitive population explosion caused by a shift to a mode of production that put a premium on child labor. Under these straitened circumstances the aged, the infirm, and the mentally disturbed imposed a severe tax on the domestic economy, and it is held that the Algonkian windigo myth was elaborated in historic times to provide a rationale for the execution of these persons.

It is argued, then, that those killed as having been possessed by the spirit of the Windigo monster were in fact victims of triage homicide or witch-hunts; events common in societies under stress. It is shown that there is no reliable evidence for psychotic cannibalism, either in the windigo literature or in the archives. Furthermore, the failure of anthropologists to distinguish the emics of thought from the etics of behavior has resulted in a double error, for "windigo psychosis" of anthropological renown conforms neither to the emic phenomenological category of the Northern Algonkians nor to their etic behavioral history.

CHAPTER I
STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM, BACKGROUND TO RESEARCH, AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

If a visitor from an advanced civilization had begun ethnographic fieldwork in Massachusetts late in the year 1692, he or she would certainly have been told about the witch trials and executions that had taken place in Salem. Many informants would doubtless have claimed that the executions were necessary; the diabolism of the witches presented an intolerable threat to the commonweal. If the fieldworker did not believe in the interaction between demons and people, he or she would be faced with making an interpretive choice. Either the "witches" were executed because they were dangerously deviant (barn-burners, well-poisoners, or worse), or the "witches" were themselves the victims of a socio-historical process neither they nor their executioners fully understood.

From the light of the late 20th century most North Americans would choose the second interpretation. Evidence for malevolence on the part of the Salem witches is unconvincing. The phrase "witch-hunt" has become an epithet in modern English, and is used to denote the victimization of the weak and the vulnerable by established interest groups. Those hanged, tortured, and crushed with weights at Salem in 1692 have been exonerated. Similarly absolved is Dorcas Good, who as a four-year-old child not only lost her mother to the gallows, but was herself kept in heavy irons in Boston prison for nine months (Boyer and Nissenbaum 1974:5).

But the memory of another group of people killed for having congress with demons remains beclouded. With beginnings that may antedate the Salem trials and continuing almost until World War I, a number of Algonkian Indians (no one knows just have many) were killed by their fellows on the grounds that they had been possessed by the spirit of a cannibal monster. Professional anthropologists have concerned themselves with this issue since shortly after 1930, a time when an "'atomistic' structure of Algonkian personality . . . and other personality theories developed as a result of interest in Gestalt psychology and psychoanalysis in the post-World War I period" (Hickerson 1967: 313). Beginning with the work of Father John M. Cooper (1933) anthropologists have explicated this phenomenon in the following way: The cultural constellation of the Northern Algonkian peoples is such that it predisposes certain individuals to fall victim to a psychosis in which state they are obsessed by a compulsive craving to eat human flesh. According to this theory these victims of "windigo psychosis"[1] are often quite willing to kill in order to satisfy their ghoulish mania. Small wonder, then, that the preemptive execution of those so afflicted has frequently been necessary.

I reject this interpretation of Cooper and his followers (Hallowell 1934, 1936; Landes 1937a,b, 1938a,b), and contend that although "windigo psychosis" has been the most celebrated culture trait of the Northern Algonkian peoples for almost half a century there probably never were any windigo psychotics in the sense that cannibalism or murder was ever committed in order to satisfy an obsessive craving for human flesh. While I agree with Preston that aspects of the windigo

belief complex may have been "components in some individuals' psychological dysfunction" (1980:128), I argue that windigo psychosis as an etic/behavioral form of anthropophagy is an artifact of research which failed to distinguish the emics of thought from the etics of behavior.

Looking at the windigo phenomenon from the point of view of group sociodynamics rather than from individual psychodynamics reveals that the crucial question to be asked is not "what causes a person to become a cannibalistic maniac?" but rather "under what circumstances is a Northern Algonkian likely to be accused of having become a cannibalistic maniac and thus run the risk of being executed as such?" Upon close scrutiny the windigo curiosity discloses itself to be not a culture-specific anthropophagic obsession, but instead a rather predictable—though culturally conditioned—variant of triage homicide and witch-hunting that is typical of societies under stress. In this process, as in all witch-hunts, the victims of aggression are socially redefined as aggressors. In this case the specific form of redefinition was determined by the constant threat of starvation; a situation in which cannibalism has proved to be a tempting recourse for persons of all cultures throughout history. By attributing society's most salient fear to the scapegoat, the group was able to project its modal anxiety onto the individual, thus generating a rationale for homicide with which anyone could identify.

It is this recurrent transmogrification—once an emic reality of Northern Algonkian mental life—that anthropology has seized upon and reified. The importance of understanding the mental emics of subject populations cannot be overstated, but to confuse these with their

etic behavioral history is an invitation to ethnological disaster (Harris 1979:31-41). It is the central point of this dissertation that such a confusion has been made systematically in anthropological writings on the windigo complex. This confusion has resulted in a double error, for the windigo "psychosis" of anthropological renown conforms neither to the emic phenomenological category of the Northern Algonkians nor to their etic behavioral history.

Epistemological and Personal Biases

As will be documented in the following chapter, we owe the existence of windigo as a "psychosis" to the ethnographic investigations of three anthropologists who were—to a greater or lesser extent—influenced by the synthesis of anthropology and neo-Freudian psychology in the 1920s and 1930s: John M. Cooper, A. Irving Hallowell, and Ruth Landes. Of the three, Hallowell has most explicitly expressed a commitment to the emics of Ojibwa life at the expense of the etics. He was not primarily concerned with what shamans, sorcerers, and windigo-killers did, but what they said or thought they did. For example, in recounting an informant's story of a sorcerer disguised as a bear, Hallowell professes no interest in the question of whether sorcerers actually did sometimes don bear costumes to frighten and intimidate their campmates. Here is the informant's story:

> The soul of a living person, too, after it leaves the body can look like an animal. A powerful medicine man can do a lot of harm because he can go about secretly at night. But you can see his body lying there in his wigwam all the time. A long time ago a friend of mine told me what he had seen. He and his wife were living with an old man suspected of being a sorcerer. One night he thought the sorcerer was up to something. The latter lit his pipe and covered himself up completely with his blanket. My friend kept watch. After a long, long time had gone by, all of a sudden the sorcerer threw off the blanket

and fell over towards the fire. Blood was running from his mouth; he was dead. My friend found out what killed him. At the very same time that the sorcerer was lying under his blanket so quietly, in another part of the camp Pidándakwan was waiting with a gun in the dark beside the body of his son who had been killed by sorcery. A kind of "fire" had appeared around the camp several times before the boy died. This night Pindándakwan saw the "fire" coming again. It made a circle around the corpse, which was covered by birch bark. He heard a voice saying, "This is finished." Then he saw a bear trying to lift the bark near the head of his son; he was going to take what he wanted. [In a note Hallowell explains that a sorcerer who kills is said to visit the corpse and cut off the fingertips, the tip of the tongue, and gouge out the eyes. He keeps these trophies in a little box for magical use. Knowing this, Pindándakwan set a trap for the sorcerer outside the wigwam, baiting it with a pseudo-grave for his son.] Pindándakwan shot the bear and he heard a man's voice crying out. Both the sorcerer and the boy were buried the next day. Everyone thought the old man was a bad one. No one blamed Pindándakwan.

Here is Hallowell's analysis:

It is obvious that, in this case, the conjurer was not understood to be prowling around dressed up in a bear skin. This was John Tanner's interpretation over a century ago, of similar stories. He writes: ". . . by some composition of gunpowder, or other means [they] contrive to give the appearance of fire to the mouth and eyes of the bear skin, in which they go about the village late at night, bent on deeds of mischief, oftentimes of blood." [James, 1830 (ed.), p. 343] This is simply Tanner's effort at an explanation intelligible to him. . . . I believe that all we need to say is that the self of the sorcerer was in Pindándakwan's camp. To say that he was there is the meaningful core of the whole situation; it was Pindándakwan's assumption that he would be there and he acted on this premise. In these terms the situation is as humanly intelligible to us as it is to the Ojibwa. What is always difficult for them is to explain what we could call the mechanism of events, exactly how they occur. To them, this line of thought seems "pedantic." Explanation is never pursued in much detail at this level (which is actually the level of science). But to say that he (the sorcerer) had killed Pindándakwan's son, that he was caught there on a particular night and killed by Pindándakwan in revenge is thoroughly meaningful to them. All they take for granted (as an implicit metaphysical principle) is that multiform appearance is an inherent potential of all animate beings. (Hallowell, 1954, reprinted in Hallowell, 1955:176-177. Italics in the original)

Hallowell has left the task half done here. "Pedantic [explanations] "actually [on] the level of science" (p. 177) are precisely those to which

we should aspire. Of course these will not be the explanations favored by most of our informants. There is no reason to expect this to be so. We must certainly do our best to enter into the emic thought world of the people we study, but that is only the first leg of the journey. We must take care lest we, like Dorothy, get swept away to the land of Oz and are unable to return to Kansas. We must be able to interpret our findings in ways that are consistent with what we know about the material world. As Hallowell points out, John Tanner—who was captured by the Indians at the age of nine and lived with them night and day for thirty years—tells us that shamans sometimes prowled the villages at night dressed in bear skins, and by some pyrotechnic device made it appear as if fire were coming from their mouths and eyes. Should an anthropologist minimize the importance of this etic datum simply because it would not necessarily be meaningful to the average Ojibwa? (Not all Ojibwa would have found Tanner's statement meaningless; the shamans themselves come immediately to mind. Also, culturally and psychologically Tanner himself was more Indian than white.)

Hallowell's claim that "all we need to say is that the self of the sorcerer was in Pindándakwan's camp," that this "is the meaningful core of the whole situation," and that "in these terms the situation is as humanly intelligible to us as it is to the Ojibwa" prematurely closes the book on the question of the relationship between meaning and causality in Ojibwa studies. As will be shown in the following chapter, many other contributors to the literature on windigo "psychosis" are constrained by the same emic and mentalistic biases.

With some exceptions, those who have studied windigo thus far have extracted one aspect of Northern Algonkian folk belief from its cultural

and environmental context and enshrined it in anthropological cliché (cf. Bishop 1975:237; Preston 1980:114; 127-128). This procedure has done justice neither to the Algonkian folk model nor to attempts at a science of history. These studies imply that if we are in the company of a Northern Algonkian we need be concerned lest he or she, for no apparent reason, be seized by the overpowering urge to dismember and eat us. Yet in the more than 300 years Europeans have been traveling about the north with Algonkian guides, canoeists, dog drivers, and freighters, not one of them has found it necessary to kill an Indian on the grounds that his companion had turned into a cannibalistic madman. Algonkians, on the other hand, have killed large numbers of their fellows on just such justification, and anthropologists accept this emic rationale without question.

If psychotic cannibalism existed in an etic/behavioral sense, it seems unlikely that it would have escaped the attention of the "old northern hands" with millenia of accumulated experience only to be "discovered" by a few psychological anthropologists in the early 1930s. Fur traders, missionaries, government officials, etc., have often been more rigorously scientific than anthropologists on the windigo issue in that they have been more careful to distinguish the emics of Northern Algonkian thought from the etics of Algonkian behavior. For example, consider the following exchange of correspondence between Hudson's Bay Company officer James Todd writing from Big Trout Lake (located in what is now northwestern Ontario) to his superior Joseph Fortesque at York Factory (located in what is now northern Manitoba) (Hudson's Bay Company Archives B. 220/6/2, 12 July 1882 Todd to Fortesque [folio 18d]):

> I have brought a man down, one of my Indians from Trout Lake, who is out of his mind. The Doctor may be able to do something for him. I therefore send him to York Factory. His wife is with him to look after his wants. He is harmless so far, at times he gets into sort of a fit, then he requires to be held, he also runs off through the woods any distance if he is not closely watched, he runs very fast, by what I hear. The complaint came upon him last April, while hunting, he is not a praying man, but the opposite, and he has his own beliefs, which I think myself has been the cause of his getting deranged. I hope some good may be done to him at York Factory.
>
> Your lunatic is quite recovered, and is a very useful man, but is very unwilling to return to your post as he fears his life might be sacrificed to the superstitions of his countrymen. (24 July 1883, Fortesque to Todd [folio 25d])
>
> I am glad to learn my lunatic has completely recovered and that he is so useful to you—I fully believe in his fears to return to Trout Lake, superstitious indeed are his countrymen indeed too much so, and above all too cowardly. (2 January 1884, Todd to Fortesque [folio 26d])

The 19th-century ethnocentrism of the Hudson's Bay men need not detain us here. The point is that there was no doubt in the mind of the man who had been mentally disturbed, or in Todd's mind, that the recovered "lunatic" was in danger of his life. No mention is made of windigo or of cannibalism in this case, but an ethnographic and ethnohistoric background in Algonkiana justifies the informed opinion that windigo possession would have been the Indian justification for homicide. The windigo issue provides a good example of why one must be cautious in defining "meaning" in ethnographic research. At the very least there is "meaning" for the killers and "meaning" for those they kill; the two are not isomorphic. The man from Big Trout Lake showed an understandable disinclination to sacrifice himself at the phenomenological altar of his society's social authorities. The emic reality of executioners has typically been preserved in dynastic histories and ethnographic field

notes; the emic reality of the executed is buried with them (cf. Harris 1979:324).

My conviction that the distinction between the emics of thought and the etics of behavior is a necessary precondition for a science of culture corresponds to the basic epistemological principles of cultural materialism (Harris 1979: 29ff). The study of an intersubjectively defined behavior stream is the key to understanding what happened in human history, and what is likely to happen in the future. Having made explicit my epistemological predelictions, let me do the same for my personal biases.

James G. E. Smith believes that cases of windigo psychosis have been underreported because of "the tendency of some writers to conceal or understate cannibalistic events, including H. R. Schoolcraft (who was married to an Ojibwa), and acculturated, literate Ojibwa such as [William W.] Warren, [Peter] Jones, and [George] Copway" (1976:31). I too am vulnerable to this charge (although Smith offers no evidence to substantiate his indictment of these men other than their racial origins or conjugal affiliation). I was married to an Ojibwa woman and have two bicultural, bilingual children of mixed European and North American ancestry. Obviously I am not a disinterested observer, and have a personal as well as academic interest in the outcome of the debate my work is sure to engender. Personally, I do not want my children to grow up believing that their people—for reasons peculiar to their culture—were or are subject to a ghoulish form of insanity wherein those afflicted kill and eat their neighbors in order to satisfy an obsessive cannibalistic craving. I would much rather have them believe that

Ojibwa culture—like all cultures—is susceptible to manifestations of witch-fear, scapegoating, and triage homicide when subjected to traumatic stress. I would also like them to know that there is no evidence for the belief that Ojibwa crisis cannibalism was substantively different from crisis cannibalism in any other culture. In addition to perpetrating an epistemological disaster, I believe that anthropology has done the Northern Algonkian peoples a great disservice by positing the existence of the windigo mania on the basis of scanty and unreliable evidence.

The readers must judge for themselves to what extent my personal involvement in this issue prejudices the value of my work. In order to aid the reader in making this judgment, an autobiogrpahical sketch is incorporated into my statement of methods and fieldwork research.

My Life and Research with the Ojibwa

Having completed work on an M.S. in interdisciplinary social science, I first went north as a graduate student in anthropology in the summer of 1972. Professor A. T. Steegmann, Jr., my advisor at the State University of New York at Buffalo, had written me into a grant application to the National Science Foundation. The application was a request to fund a series of studies of human biology and cultural ecology in the boreal forest zone of northwestern Ontario. My own research was to have been an inquiry into the Northern Algonkian strategies for dealing with the Subarctic cold, as well as the study of hunting and trapping techniques and attendant corpus of survival skills. At the time my working assumption, and the assumption of all the other members of the research team, was that the severe cold of the region was the paramount environmental hazard; an assumption that later proved false (Marano 1981).

Although my primary interest at the time was in human biology and subsistence activities, I also had a keen interest in ethnology and general anthropology. I received from the accumulated works of Hallowell and Landes the vicarious thrills one might expect from good adventure novels. The work of Dunning (1959) and Rogers (1962) seemed quite a bit more sedate, and I was not sure how to account for this discrepancy. The prospect of the 1972 summer field trip filled me with excitement, for it would give me the chance to see the Northern Algonkians and their culture first hand.

The purpose of the trip for me was to familiarize myself with the area, find a suitable community in which to do doctoral research, and get permission from the local leaders to conduct the research after explaining to them what I wanted to do. For my traveling companions Ted Steegmann (now chairman of the anthropology department at the State University of New York at Buffalo) and Marshall Hurlich (now assistant professor of anthropology at the University of Washington) the trip was to be more structured; they were to proceed to Fort Severn, Ontario, to administer a series of anthropometric protocols. Fort Severn, the most far-flung community in the province, is situated near the shores of Hudson Bay and was to be the site of Hurlich's doctoral research in 1973-74.

Twenty-four hours on the train from Toronto brought us to Sioux Lookout, the jumping-off point for northwestern Ontario. After Steegmann and Hurlich caught a plane to Fort Severn the weather deteriorated, making flying impossible but giving me extra time to decide on the village to visit. After ruling out the larger communities I settled on Bearskin Lake, probably for its rustic name.

My visit to Bearskin was both confusing and rewarding. Through an interpreter I explained my plans and wishes to the band councillor. His response was that it is written in the Bible that people should not drink, and that it is sinful to do so. I allowed that I drank very little and would not drink at all during the fieldwork period. I repeated my request for permission to work in the village. His answer was that Jesus didn't want people to drink either. I took this as a provisional affirmative. The next week was spent getting acquainted with the people and the locale, doing some interviewing (taping the interviews with their translations), taking notes, and making up a short Ojibwa vocabulary. I returned to Buffalo with the expectation that I would be back in Bearskin in the fall of 1974 for a year's fieldwork.

Although for a number of personal reasons I never returned to Bearskin to do doctoral research, this was not the end of my association with the Northern Ojibwa. I next returned to them as a research assistant to Professor Steegman, who had been influential in kindling my interest in the boreal forest Algonkians. Steegmann's plan was to go to the village of Round (Weagamow) Lake, Ontario, from January to March, 1974, to do a series of field experiments and laboratory experiments designed to learn more about the process of thermo-regulation of hand temperatures among cold-acclimatized Northern Ojibwa. Some of the field experiments controlled for exercise and insulation, and others measured the finger temperatures of subjects as they went about their normal outdoor tasks. The laboratory experiments involved the monitoring of hand temperatures through a thirty-minute immersion in 5°C ice water and recovery rates after withdrawal. When the man slated to accompany Steegmann as his research assistant backed out, I was eager to go in his stead.

Steegmann and I arrived in Round Lake early in January 1974 and completed the work in less time than anticipated (see Steegmann 1974; Hurlich and Steegmann 1979; Steegmann [ed.] 1981). In addition to acting as Steegmann's research assistant, I did some research of my own into the behavioral strategies employed by the Northern Ojibwa in their hunting and trapping activities. This work—which was mostly interviews supplemented by some personal observation—was used as the basis of my M.A. thesis in anthropology (Marano 1974).

When Steegmann returned to Buffalo in mid-February 1974 I elected to remain in the village for reasons that are still not completely clear to me. Like many Vietnam veterans I had experienced reentry problems into my own society. This was not an issue when I was with the Indians. I had met a young Ojibwa woman of whom I was fond. Moreover, I felt relaxed and comfortable my first year with the Round Lake Ojibwa; more so than in my hometown of Buffalo.

I returned to Buffalo in March 1974 but was back in Round Lake in April. My Ojibwa friend and her father had promised to take me "spring trapping," and I did not want to miss this opportunity. In early May, as the ice was breaking up along the Caribou River, we trapped muskrat, beaver, and otter, and hunted ducks.

In Buffalo during the summer of 1974 I wrote up my master's project and negotiated with a bush-plane company to work as their agent in Round Lake. Eva and I were married in August 1974, and I began working for Hooker Air Service in September, first in Pickle Lake, Ontario, then on to Round Lake when the airport opened in October. With the aid of my affines I built a small log house. October 1974 to June 1975 were spent looking after the concerns of Hooker Air Service and

the needs of my new extended family. I hunted (mostly small game) and fished with a net.

By the time I was laid off work in June 1975, my wife was pregnant. I applied for the job of an adult education teacher of math and English for the 1975-76 school year and then my wife, her parents, younger sister, and I went to the family hunting territory at North Caribou Lake and lived off the land in the summer of 1975. This was accomplished with the aid of guns, ammunition, a fishnet, some flour, oats, tea, sugar, and salt.

My son Ronald was born in December 1975, when I was working as an adult education teacher. When my contract expired in April 1976, I took my wife and son and our belongings, flew to Sioux Lookout, and got on the next westbound train. After three months of searching for a job in British Columbia and Washington State, I received two offers at about the same time. One was a CETA job in Pierce County, Washington, and the other was that of lecturer in anthropology in the Brandon University Northern Teacher Education Program.

Brandon University, a small institution in western Manitoba, had received governmental funding to train native peoples in the northern part of the province. The goal was to allow the students to study for their Manitoba teacher's certificates on their own reserves. My first assignment was that of a "traveling professor" who would maintain a residence in Winnipeg and spend four days a week teaching in the north. This usually meant flying out early Monday morning and returning on Thursday evening. I did this the first year I worked for Brandon, and the following two years were spent as a resident "centre coordinator" at

two Algonkian reserves in northern Manitoba. Table 1 shows the dates and nature of my experiences with the Northern Algonkians from 1972 to 1980. Although I did not go to the boreal forest to study windigo, I was able to learn something about the concept as it is currently used among the Northern Ojibwa. My report on this emic category is given in Chapter II.

But what has been even more important to my understanding of windigo is the feeling for Northern Algonkian life I acquired during my protracted interaction with them in their Subarctic environment. Many of the stories in Morton Teicher's (1960) compendium of windigo cases simply did not ring true to me, and this impelled me to search for original sources whenever there was a hint that such might still be extant. The interpretations I give to these sources in Chapter IV could have been made only by someone with intimate knowledge of Northern Algonkian life.

How I Got Interested in and Carried Out the Study of Windigo

Of course, like every Algonkianist, I was aware of "windigo psychosis." I had read Parker (1960), Hay (1971), and Rohrl (1970) in my graduate school days, and found these explications unsatisfying. The accounts in Landes (1937b, 1938b) and Hallowell (1955) seemed to be much closer to the spirit of Ojibwa life, but they did not in my opinion do much to advance our scientific understanding of the windigo phenomenon. As my life among the Northern Algonkians progressed, I began to be aware that their conception of windigo was not a very close approximation to the "psychosis" in the anthropological literature. But I was

Table 1

Chronology and Nature of Author's Experience with Northern Algonkian Indians of Canada

Date	Place	Activity	Population
June-July 1972	Bearskin Lake, Ontario; via Sioux Lookout and Red Lake, Ontario	Preliminary ethnographic fieldwork	Northern Ojibwa
Jan.-Mar. 1974	Weagamow (Round) Lake, Ontario	Assistant in human biology experiments. Conducted uncontrolled field experiments determining hand temperatures under normal winter working conditions. Taped interviews of senior men. Learned to snowshoe and fish through ice. Went on first winter moose hunt.	Northern Ojibwa
Apr.-June 1974	Round Lake and North Caribou River, Ontario	Much deeper immersion into Ojibwa life. Spring hunting and trapping expedition; lakes frozen, rivers breaking up. Canoe and toboggan handling. Spring snow-crust moose hunting. More interviewing and taping. Beginnings of language skills. Partial mastery of kinship system.	Northern Ojibwa
Aug. 1974	Round Lake	More of above; summer conditions	Northern Ojibwa
Sept.-Oct. 1974	Pickle Lake, Ontario	Made up loads for bush planes going north. Worked with Indian crews loading planes.	Ojibwa and Cree

Table 1—(continued)

Date	Place	Activity	Population
Oct. 1974-June 1975	Round Lake, Ontario	Worked for Hooker Air. Total immersion into Ojibwa life. Hunting and fishing supplement to store food. Increase in language proficiency. Fully functioning member of kinship system	Northern Ojibwa
July-Aug. 1975	North Caribou Lake, Ontario	Subsistence forager with small family group.	Northern Ojibwa
Sept. 1975-April 1976	Round Lake, Ontario	Teacher of mathematics and English to adult Indian students. Continued intense interaction with Round Lake Ojibwa.	Northern Ojibwa
Aug. 1976-March 1977	Cross Lake, Manitoba, and Island Lake, Manitoba	Traveling Professor, Brandon University, Northern Teacher Education Project	Cree and Northern Ojibwa
Apr.-May 1977	N. Caribou Lake and Round Lake, Ontario	Spring trapping	Northern Ojibwa
Summer 1977	Dauphin and Swan River, Manitoba	Traveling Professor, Brandon University	Ojibwa, Cree, Metis
Sept. 1977 June 1978	Island Lake, Manitoba	Centre Coordinator, Brandon University	Northern Ojibwa

Table 1—(continued)

Date	Place	Activity	Population
Sept. 1978-August 1979	Peguis and Fisher River, Manitoba	Centre Coordinator, Brandon University	Cree and Ojibwa
July-Aug. 1980	Round Lake, Ontario	Visiting	Northern Ojibwa

not a psychological anthropologist. Beginning in 1975, my work among the Northern Algonkians came to be more of an applied, interventionist nature involving the delivery of educational services. And perhaps, I thought, the disjunction between the contemporary Algonkian and the classical anthropological windigo was the result of acculturation.

Whenever the opportunity arose during the three years I worked for Brandon University in northern Manitoba, I would come in to the University of Winnipeg to use the library. I would use the resources of the library to prepare lectures for my classes, to keep myself current on developments in anthropology, and to pursue my own intellectual interests.

It was at the University of Winnipeg that I met Robert Fraser, a laboratory demonstrator in the Department of Anthropology. Richard Preston of McMaster University had delivered a guest lecture on the subject of windigo at the University of Winnipeg in the winter of 1978-79. I was unable to attend the lecture and asked Bob what it had been about. Fraser gave me a brief overview of Preston's talk (see Preston 1980) and then came up with a fascinating idea of his own. He told me that in the rare book room of the University library was the manuscript autobiography of a missionary by the name of Frederick Stevens (n.d.). Stevens, he said, had visited Sandy Lake in the years before the infamous windigo killings by the Fiddler brothers. According to Fraser, Stevens had reported that most of the "windigos" killed were nursing mothers (Stevens n.d.:43). Stevens also stressed the starvation conditions under which the Sandy Lake Ojibwa lived at the time of his visits (1943: 4-9, n.d.:42-43). It would be hard to imagine, said Fraser, a more

effective means of population control than the elimination of nursing mothers. Not only would it remove reproductive women from the society, but the nursing infants would also have a slim chance of survival.

I was very excited by Fraser's idea. Since Sandy Lake is only 80 miles west of Round Lake, and since the Sandy Lakers are closely related to the people at Island Lake where I had lived in 1977-78, I had heard of the Fiddler killings (see Chapter IV) but did not know what to make of them. Here was a chance to test a demo-environmental theory of windigo executions by means of an etic report. I told Fraser that I was interested in pursuing the subject in a serious way, and asked if he wished to exercise prior claim to the topic. No, he replied. He was discouraged with anthropology and was going to British Columbia to grow apples. The way was clear.

Stevens' autobiography proved to be an intriguing document in many respects, but disappointing as far as Fraser's theory was concerned. It was true that he wrote "in six years, eight persons had been killed [as windigo], most of them nursing mothers" (n.d.:43) but in this he was not reporting first-hand observation, but hearsay. Stevens wrote these words from Fisher River in the Manitoba interlake district. By this time he had been out of touch with the Sandy Lakers for six years. But a cursory review of the windigo literature brought me to Teicher (1960). Teicher's source for the Sandy Lake killings was the Annual Archaeological Report (hereafter AAR) 1907, which was an appendix to the report of the Ontario Minister of Education (1908:91-121). This fascinating document was available at the Manitoba Legislative Library in Winnipeg, and turned out to be a transcript of Joseph Fiddler's trial at Norway House

on October 7, 1907. The Sandy Lake cases and the Moostoos case were the two data sets most thoroughly summarized in Teicher. Teicher's sources for the Moostoos case were trial summaries printed in the Annual Archaeological Report for the year 1903 (1904:126-138). Through correspondence I was able to get government records pertaining to the Sandy Lake cases from the Public Archives of Canada (hereafter PAC) (1907-08; 1907-09) and for the Moostoos case (PAC 1899). From the Clerk of the Edmonton Court I received additional material on the Moostoos case (Edmonton Court Files [hereafter ECF] 1899: Cr. 157). (Most of the government and legal files are unpaginated.)

The documentary sources did not lend support to Stevens' nursing-mother statement, but the striking thing about all these documents was the total absence of cannibalism. On this point Indians, Mounties, missionaries, traders, and jurists agreed. Four of Teicher's seventy cases of "windigo psychosis" came from the Sandy Lake materials, yet in these cases the Indians themselves never stated that these four executed persons ever showed the slightest desire to eat anyone. To be sure, Moostoos' executioners emphatically claimed that the dead man had voiced cannibalistic desires, and that this was the reason why they had to sink an axe into his head. But by the same token they also claimed that before his execution Moostoos was floating up over their heads and it was a hard job to pull him back down to earth (AAR 1903 [1904:130]).

By this time I knew I was on to something. My five years' experience with the Northern Algonkians had taught me that the term "windigo" was—at least in the 1970s—seldom if ever used to denote cannibalism in fact or in desire. I was annoyed by the sensationalistic and

speculative explications of "windigo psychosis" in the anthropological literature. To me there was nothing bizarre or sensational about Ojibwa life. They were ordinary people with ordinary human problems who tried to deal with their problems in much the same way that other people with similar sets of problems dealt with theirs. A nomothetic explanation for windigo executions suggested itself. In the Sandy Lake cases sick people were "put out of [their] misery" (AAR 1907 [1908:104]). Moostoos was almost certainly the victim of a witch-hunt. It seemed very likely that these well documented cases were representative of the windigo universe. Further archival and ethnohistoric research has revealed nothing to cause me to reject my theory.

Acknowledgments

Through the very professional assistance of Ms. Joanne A. Frodsham, state and military archivist at the Public Archives of Canada in Ottawa, I was able to obtain the 48-page Department of Justice capital case file on the case of Swift Runner (PAC 1879). As set forth in Chapter IV, the Swift Runner case is the only windigo incident for which archival data exist that involve cannibalism, and I believe this to be an instance of famine cannibalism. Ms. Frodsham also provided me with additional unpublished materials on the Fiddler (Wasakapeequay) case (PAC 1907-08, 1907-09), the Moostoos case (PAC 1899), and all the material I have on a long forgotten incident, the mysterious Mapanin execution (PAC 1896). I am extemely grateful to her for this invaluable primary source information.

Robert Fraser not only rekindled my interest in windigo in the manner noted above, but he shared his copy of the Campbell diary (n.d.)

with me, and assisted me in finding the 1838 census figures for the Island Lake District. I am in his debt, and may his orchards thrive.

My thanks go out to Mrs. Shirlee Smith, Ms. Garron Wells, and Mr. Alex Ross, archivists for the Hudson's Bay Company collection in Winnipeg. They have never failed to be helpful and cooperative and made it possible for me to make the most of the limited periods of time I had to work in the HBC Archives. Their assistance has provided me with much valuable background information, including census figures for northern Ontario and northern Manitoba in the 19th century. I am also indebted to Mrs. Betty Barnes of the United Church House in Winnipeg for kindly providing me with a copy of Stevens' account, "Sandy Lake" (1943).

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But of all the archivists who assisted me in my search for the historical windigo, none was so helpful as the Rev. J. Ernest Nix,

Deputy Archivist of the United Church of Canada in Toronto. Mr. Nix spent weeks helping me to investigate a crucial element in this dissertation: the issue of the veracity and reliability of the missionary Frederick George Stevens (see Chapter III). Mr. Nix took a personal interest in the story of his brother minister, and devoted a great deal of his energy to the retrieval of the Stevens material, and to other aspects of the windigo puzzle. I am extremely thankful to him for all his help and support.

I am also grateful to Charles Wagley for his comments on an earlier version of Chapter II. It was he who pointed out the significance of Kluckhohn's Navaho Witchcraft (1944) to my study. J. Anthony Parades' response to an earlier draft of Chapter II was most gracious, and I thank him for bringing J. G. E. Smith's "Notes on the Wittiko" (1976) to my attention. In a meticulous critique of an earlier paper (Marano 1979), Jean Briggs made me aware of Edmund Carpenter's "Witch-Fear among the Aivilik Eskimos" (1953).

Both Edward S. Rogers and Richard J. Preston read my 1979 manuscript and offered useful suggestions. Rogers has shared some of his archival notes with me, including the exchange of correspondence between Fortesque and Todd found earlier in this chapter. I very much appreciate this, and other favors.

My special thanks go to Marvin Harris, whose analysis of the European witch-craze (1974) helped me while still in the field make the mental connections from which this dissertation grew. Professor Harris' comments and criticisms have greatly improved this dissertation. It is difficult to express the value of the intellectual

stimulation I have received from association with him, or of his personal generosity and support. I alone, however, am responsible for possible errors or omissions.

Note

[1]Windigo {wIndIgo} is the most common Ojibwa pronunciation and wiitiko {witIko} is most common among the Cree, but the voiced or voiceless quality of stops is not phonemic in either language. For purposes of this dissertation the allomorph /windigo/ is used except within direct quotes. The word begins with an upper case letter when it refers to the Algonkian mythological personage and with a lower case letter elsewhere, quotes excepted.

CHAPTER II
REVIEW OF THE WINDIGO LITERATURE

Introduction

"Windigo psychosis" has been the most celebrated culture trait of the Northern Algonkian peoples for almost half a century. As a classic example of "culture-bound psychopathology" its capacity to inspire theorization in anthropology and the related disciplines seems inexhaustible. This chapter is a review of the voluminous windigo literature enlightened by five years' field experience among the Northern Ojibwa and the Cree, as well as extensive archival research on the subject.

The review which follows focuses on published explications of the "psychosis,"[1] and shows that there is insufficient evidence for the etic behavioral existence of the mania in this literature. A full analysis of the ethnohistoric and ethnographic data is presented in subsequent chapters, but a brief summary is in order here.

Seventy-odd "cases of windigo psychosis" can be tabulated. (Seventy have been summarized in Teicher's anthology alone [1960].) None of these "cases" provide first-hand accounts of cannibalism, and some are so far removed from the events they purport to describe that they can be classified most charitably as rumor. In other words data are almost all emic inputs from informants who were not themselves involved in, or witnesses to, the events at issue; etic

inputs are absent. But some of these cases—about 10%—can be studied both emically and etically by reading court records, trial transcripts, and police investigation reports. In these documents the words of the principals are recorded, as well as the reports of outside investigators whose business it was to determine the behavioral facts as best they could. The value of these cases is far superior to that of the others for two reasons: The emic inputs come from those personally involved, and etic inputs are also present.

In only one of the documentary cases did cannibalism occur, and this was a case of murder-cannibalism under starvation conditions. This is hardly evidence of psychosis, nor is such behavior culture-specific. The man in this case was not confronted by his fellow Indians, but was arrested by the Mounted Police and executed by the Dominion Government (Public Archives of Canada [hereafter PAC] 1879). The remaining executions of windigo "psychotics" were carried out by Indians and appear to be thinly disguised rationalizations for triage homicide (AAR 1907 [1908]: PAC 1907-08, Edmonton Court Files [hereafter ECF] 1899), and another appears to be the case of a man who, for reasons of his own, engineered his own death (Manitoba Court of Queen's Bench 1899).

It seems likely that the 10% sample these documented cases constitute is representative of the "windigo" universe. This statistical finding is reenforced by my ethnographic observations. In five years in the boreal forest I saw frequent instances of scapegoating, and heard countless witchcraft accusations, but never encountered one shred of

evidence for cannibalistic yearnings. It was also patently clear that the Northern Algonkian windigo is a much more inclusive folk taxon than the windigo of anthropology. I contend that there is no good documentation for windigo psychosis, and argue that the hearsay reports and folk tales that have served as points of departure for contrary conclusions do not constitute a reliable body of evidence.

Background to the Literature Review

Having arrived at this determination via the intellecutal peregrination outlined above, I set out to research this review comprehensively. Much to my surprise I discovered that John Honigmann reached essentially the same conclusion and published his analysis in 1967! (p. 401). How could the work of such a distinguished psychological anthropologist and northernist have been ignored by the discipline for so long after he questioned in print the authenticity of one of the most precious jewels in the crown of culture-and-personality? A historical reconstruction may help answer this question.

Honigmann was generally cautious and temperate in his treatment of the windigo in his text Culture and Personality (1954:379-382). By 1967 his thoughts on the subject had matured to the point where he was able to generate this noteworthy passage. Referring to Morton Teicher's (1960) assemblage of windigo accounts, he wrote:

> Some of [Teicher's] cases describe individuals whom famine had driven to cannibalism, but who felt no emotional compulsion to eat human flesh and came away from their desperate act without suffering any notable personality disorder. They can hardly be considered victims of Wiitiko disorder, regardless of what their neighbors darkly suspected. As for the other cases, I can't find one that satisfactorily attests to someone being seriously obsessed by the idea of committing cannibalism. By "satisfactory" I mean a trustworthy observer's eyewitness report of a person who

> in his own words or by his own actions clearly admits to a compulsion to eat human flesh. All cases on record fall short of my standard. Often they recount what others told a writer, sometimes as an informant whose creditability itself remains in doubt. Sometimes, as I have already said, such heresay evidence simply reports uncomplicated famine cannibalism. Other hearsay accounts describe people being killed, perhaps at their own behest, for their dangerous preoccupation with cannibalism, but the reporter didn't himself hear their admission. Hence I can't help but wonder if in those executions the Indians, rather like Euro-american witch hunters, didn't simply suspect the victims, in conformity with their firm belief about compulsive cannibalism. Some instances are court cases involving men tried for murder, but the trial accounts don't clearly prove obsessive-compulsive behavior. (Honigmann 1967:401; emphasis added)

These singular perceptions have been almost completely overlooked in anthropology. (Victor Barnouw, for example, ignores them utterly [1979:340-343].) A partial explanation may be found in the fact that the passage quoted above is embedded almost as an aside within an entirely conventional discussion of the windigo (Honigmann 1967:399-403). Honigmann never specifically denied the existence of the "psychosis," and his consideration of etic/behavioral data is limited to Teicher's compendium of "cases." My investigation into the court cases referred to by Honigmann reveals unpublished materials indicating a complete absence of psychotic cannibalism. Moreover, my reading of archival sources indicates that, from an etic perspective, all executed "windigo victims" met death at the hands of their fellow Indians for reasons completely unrelated to the threat of their committing cannibalism. Another reason why Honigmann's contribution has gone largely unnoticed may be that Personality in Culture (Honigmann 1967) was not particularly well received. Personality in Culture was a carefully prepared and attractively packaged textbook, but it had the misfortune of appearing at a time when the fashionability of psychological anthropology was at a low

ebb. Having lost a large segment of the anthropological market to historical vicissitude, Honigmann doubtless lost a quite different group of readers by his explicit rejection of nomothetic research strategies and his espousal of the principles of existential phenomenology (1967:xi-xii). In spite of our theoretical differences, Honigmann's mature thoughts on the windigo correspond to mine almost exactly, but I did not read them until seven years after beginning fieldwork among the Northern Algonkians and a year and a half after I became interested in the windigo as an intellectual problem. I can only wish that I had read Personality in Culture in 1973.

This review critically traces the development of the "windigo psychosis" from its inception to the present. It will be shown that by the time Honigmann published his insightful reflections in 1967, "windigo psychosis" had achieved such a reified status in anthropology that it was easy to ignore his signal contribution through the inertia of received wisdom. Nevertheless, those who published on the subject after 1967 without reference to Honigmann's work must ultimately bear the responsibility for their omission.

Windigo Psychosis, 1933-67

When speaking of the windigo, we may draw at least three categorical distinctions. The first is Windigo as superhuman monster(s) who may or may not have had human antecedents. (For a stylized portrayal see Guinard [1930].) The second is a category of persons, the members of which may or may not be considered to have been possessed by the spirit of a cannibal-monster. The third is a culture-specific psychotic syndrome, the victims of which are obsessed by a compulsive desire to

eat human flesh. The first two are Northern Algonkian categories and concepts; the third is a child of 20th-century anthropology.

Windigo was first identified as a "sickness" by J. E. Saindon, an Oblate missionary who worked among the Cree of western James Bay in the early part of this century. Father Saindon has the singular distinction of being the first and only individual to observe a windigo victim and report those observations in print (1928:28, 1933:11-12). The experience was quite unspectacular and corresponds very closely to my own interactions with Northern Algonkians who "feel-like-a-windigo." F., the victim in Saindon's account, showed no inclination whatever that she wanted to eat anyone. Her symptoms were that she did not wish to see anyone outside her immediate family because strangers looked like wild animals to her and she experienced urges to kill them in self-defense. It is interesting that Saindon makes no mention at all of cannibalism in relation to windigo, but calls it a "psychoneurosis" which is "in certain cases an obsession and in others hysteria . . . characterized by an unbalanced imagination and an excessive impressionability" (Saindon 1928:27; emphasis added).[2] It appears that F. was the only windigo victim Saindon ever observed.

Saindon assured F. that she would get well and she responded immediately to the suggestion (1933:12). John Honigmann, a scant page away from his unique contribution, nevertheless overlooked the most valuable piece of information now recoverable from Saindon's account when he wrote: "Unfortunately, when the priest entered her tent he didn't give her a chance to describe her symptoms; so there went a rare opportunity for an inquirer with a good knowledge of Cree to interview

a victim of Wiitiko disorder" (1967:400). But Honigmann here missed the main point. Of course it would have been desirable to have more background information on F., but the most diagnostic symptom of all in the case was the fact that the patient was cured (or at least went into indefinite remission) by a suggestion from an authority figure. That is not behavior characteristic of a psychotic. If psychoses were that easy to cure our mental hospitals would be empty. We must also consider the possibility that F.'s symptoms were nothing more or less than the ones Saindon reported. F. appears to have been phobic and neurotic, but showed no sign of acting in a homicidal or cannibalistic manner.

From this narrow data base has come a torrent of interpretive elaboration. Saindon was urged to publish his observations by his friend and fellow priest, anthropologist John M. Cooper (Saindon 1933:1). In the same issue of Primitive Man in which Saindon's modest reports appeared, Cooper published his blood-curdling paper "The Cree Witiko Psychosis" (1933). It was in this brief and phantasmagoric communication that the word "psychosis" was first applied to the windigo phenomenon. Although it was Cooper's contention that "the factual data here given are, except where otherwise stated from the present writer's field notes taken among the eastern and western Cree and other Algonquian-speaking peoples" (1933:20), Cooper does not present a single specific instance of windigo psychosis nor any evidence of first-hand observation of such behavior. Cooper's initial description of the "psychosis" is worth quoting at some length, for it set the tone for two generations of scholarship on the subject (1933:21).

> Cannibalism was resorted to by the Cree only in cases where actual starvation threatened. Driven to desperation by prolonged famine and often suffering from mental breakdown as a result thereof, the

> Cree would sometimes eat the bodies of those who had perished, or, more rarely, would even kill the living and partake of the flesh. This solution, however, of the conflict between hunger and the rigid tribal taboo often left, as its aftermath, an "unnatural" craving for human flesh, or a psychosis that took the form of such a craving. More rarely such a psychosis developed in men or women who had not themselves previously passed through famine experience.

That "cannibalism was resorted to by the Cree only in cases where starvation threatened" seems to me to be a perfectly reasonable statement, but that crisis cannibalism should result in a psychotic craving for human flesh is a contention that demands specific verification. It has never resulted in an obsessive psychosis in any other part of the world. Survivors of the Donner party did not stalk the California gold fields searching for unsuspecting prospectors to eat (McGlashan 1947: 236-261; Stewart 1960:280-293). It is probably true that breaking a taboo on one occasion lowers the threshold for breaking it on subsequent occasions. For this reason the Indians doubtless tried to avoid getting themselves into a food crisis with those who had already broken it.

Contrast Cooper's statement with those of Hudson's Bay Company officer and explorer Samuel Hearne, who lived for twenty years among the Cree. In reporting the extreme hunger he and his party experienced on his second expedition in search of the Coppermine River and Northwest Passage, he wrote:

> The relation of such uncommon hardships may perhaps gain little credit in Europe; while those who are conversant with the history of Hudson's Bay, and who are thoroughly acquainted with the distress which the natives of the country about it frequently endure, may consider them as no more than the common occurrences of an Indian life, in which they are frequently driven to the necessity of eating one another. (1971 [1795]: 34).

By the time Hearne wrote these words in 1770, the Hudson's Bay Company was already celebrating its first centenary. Whether or not eating one another was a frequent necessity for the Cree before the fur-trade epoch is a matter for further research, but in a footnote added later to the quoted passage, Hearne continued:

> It is the general opinion of the Southern [i.e., Cree] Indians, that when any of their tribe have been driven to the necessity of eating human flesh, they become so fond of it, that no person is safe in their company. And though it is well known they are never guilty of making this horrid repast but when driven to it by necessity, yet those who have made it are not only shunned, but so universally detested by all who know them, that no Indians will tent with them, and they are frequently murdered slily [sic]. I have seen several of those poor wretches who, unfortunately for them, have come under the above description, and though they were persons much esteemed before hunger had driven them to this act, were afterward so universally despised and neglected, that a smile never graced their countenances: deep melancholy has been seated on their brows, while the eye most expressively spoke the dictates of the heart, and seemed to say, "Why do you despise me for my misfortunes? The period is probably not far distant, when you may be driven to the like necessity!"
>
> In the Spring of the year 1775, when I was building Cumberland House an Indian, whose name was Wapoos [Hare], came to the settlement, at a time when fifteen tents of Indians were on the plantations [sic!]: they examined him very minutely, and found he had come a considerable way by himself, without a gun or ammunition. This made many of them conjecture he had met with, and killed, some person by the way; and this was the more easily credited, from the care he took to conceal a bag of provisions, which he had brought with him, in a lofty pine-tree near the house.
>
> Being a stranger, I invited him in, though I saw he had nothing for trade; and during that interview, some of the Indian women examined his bag; and gave it as their opinion that the meat it contained was human flesh: in consequence it was not without the interference of some principal Indians, whose liberality of sentiment was more extensive than in the others, the poor creature saved his life. Many of the men cleaned and loaded their guns; others had their bows and arrows ready; and even the women took possession of the hatchets, to kill this poor inoffensive wretch, for no crime but that of travelling about two hundred miles by himself, unassisted by fire-arms for support in his journey. (1971 [1795]: 34-35)

Psychologically oriented anthropologists will recognize in this account an example of the human tendency to condemn most vigorously in others that which is most feared in oneself, as well as the propensity to project those fears onto vulnerable others. It is suggested here that the windigo belief complex evolved among the Northern Algonkians as a way to help minimize the chances of getting caught in a famine with those who had already broken the taboo against cannibalism, to minimize the liabilities imposed by the incapacitated, and as a way of focusing group anxieties and aggressions onto individuals adjudged socially expendable. It is not central to my argument whether this cultural configuration was aboriginal, or whether it was a post-contact elaboration of pre-Columbian cosmology which developed in response to deteriorating infrastructural conditions. My judgment is that there is more evidence for the latter position, but in either case we need not accept the emic categories and concepts of our native informants as our own. A lowered threshold to breaking a taboo against cannibalism in a crisis is a far cry from an obsessive cannibalistic compulsion.

Cooper's last statement in the quoted paragraph that "more rarely such a psychosis developed in men or women who had not themselves previously passed through famine experience" is one that if taken seriously directly contradicts his first sentence, which affirms the exclusively nutritional impetus for Cree cannibalism (1933:21). While Saindon's informants told him that the windigo sickness was "a strange malady that is rare today, but was formerly more frequent" (1933:11), Cooper asserts in the same issue of Primitive Man that it is "a common psychosis among the eastern Cree and kindred tribes show[ing] two

peculiar characteristics: the victim develops an 'unnatural' craving for human flesh; he turns into an ice-hearted Witiko" (1933:24).

From these beginnings the misunderstandings snowballed. It could even be argued that the windigo phenomenon is more of an example of mass suggestibility among anthropologists than it was among Northern Algonkian Indians. A. Irving Hallowell (1934) quickly confirmed the existence of the disorder among the Berens River Saulteaux, a Northern Ojibwa group. Taking the information provided by his informants at face value, Hallowell identified the physical symptoms of the disease: a distaste for ordinary foods, nausea, vomiting. He reported that "if there were no improvement the afflicted one would often ask to be killed and this desire was usually gratified" (1934:8). Hallowell also distinguished between early and late stages of the disorder even though he had no first-hand knowledge of either stage. If in the first state the victim was depressed and nauseous, "in these later cases (of which I have no specific records) the individual does not merely develop a fear of becoming cannibalistic but may exhibit a positive desire for human flesh, or even take steps to satisfy this desire. . . . But the cases of which I have knowledge were only in the initial anxiety stage and the persons affected were either killed or they recovered" (1934:8; italics added). Since Hallowell's informants could give him no specific instances of the second, or cannibal-psychotic, stage of the disorder, it would have been appropriate for him to have been more skeptical of its existence. Moreover, Hallowell did not attempt to ascertain the conditions under which anxious and anorexic Ojibwa were killed, and those under which they were allowed to recover. The statement that they

would "often ask to be killed" cannot be taken seriously in an etic, behavioral sense without a sample of actual cases.

The next Algonkianist to take up the windigo theme was Ruth Landes. Landes based her conclusions on information gathered during visits to the Manitou Reserve, on the Rainy River in southwest Ontario in the summers of 1932 and 1933, and from an extensive correspondence with her principal informant, Mrs. Maggie Wilson (Landes 1937a,b, 1938a,b). Of all the Algonkianists of the period, Landes' descriptions of the windigo phenomenon are the most elaborate, and it is probably for this reason that her writings seem to be the ones most often referred to by those who have attempted to comment on "windigo psychosis" by means of secondary sources alone (e.g. Parker 1960; Teicher 1960; Arieti and Meth 1959; Linton 1956; Lewis 1958 [quoted in Wing 1978:72-73]; Bolman and Katz 1966; Hay 1971).

It is unfortunate that Landes' most estimable contribution to the windigo issue has been wholly neglected, for she wrote that "from the psychiatric point of view . . . all Ojibwa neuroses and psychoses fall under the one category: windigo" (1938a:30). And in another paper: "All [Ojibwa] insanities are generically termed windigo" (1937a:46). The far-reaching implications of these statements seem never to have given pause to subsequent researchers. If what Landes was saying is that the Ojibwa tend to apply the term "windigo" to just about any form of mental disturbance, then she was correct as I can confirm from my own observations. But if that is what she meant, it becomes at once obvious that the Ojibwa emic category is not isomorphic with the then newly emerging etic anthropological category (cf. Preston 1980). The difference between the emic and etic meanings of windigo is much

greater than spirit-possession on the one hand versus psychosis on the other. The difference is that the Indians apply the term to cases where no cannibalism or murder is suspected or anticipated, and the anthropologists do not. If anthropologists had taken this aspect of Landes' work seriously, we would have been forced to conclude that emically speaking "windigo" is a very inclusive term. In my own experience, in the vast majority of cases in which the Indians employ the term there is no psychosis by either Algonkian or European criteria, much less a psychosis involving murder and cannibalism. Unfortunately, anthropologists zeroed in on the bizarre, the grotesque, and the macabre in Landes' reports rather than on the inconsistencies and their second-hand nature. This bias toward the exotic in anthropology has been identified and criticized in other contexts by Naroll and Naroll (1963).

While Landes' identification of the broad nature of the Algonkian windigo concept is most praiseworthy, her description of the phenomenon is problematic in other respects. In one paper she writes that the disorder is pretty much confined to males with shamanistic power who attribute failure in the hunt to the curses of rival shamans; women being relatively free from the condition (1938a:31). But in a book appearing in the same year (1936b:213-226) she not only recounts tales of many female windigowak, but also states that babies and even dogs are considered to be susceptible to the affliction.

The windigo literature got to be the way it is because early 20th-century ethnologists in general and Algonkianists in particular failed to make explicit the distinction between data about which the observer is the ultimate judge of the adequacy of categories and concepts (etics) and data about which the informant is the ultimate judge of same (emics).

More precisely, their work also suffered from the failure to distinguish the emics of thought from the etics of behavior (Harris 1979:27-45). Further evidence for the necessity of making these distinctions can be found in the following passage (Landes 1938b:217; italics added, quotation marks and parenthetical comments in the original):

> An infant son of the great shaman Great Mallard Duck was viewed by his mother's co-wife and by his half-sisters and brothers as a windigo, and was therefore killed. This happened during a period of starvation, when seven out of Duck's family of sixteen person's died of hunger. "The baby that was nursing was just crazy. He was eating his fingers up (this is considered cannibalistic) and biting off the nipples of his (dead) mother's breasts. They knew he was to become a little windigo. His eyes were blazing and his teeth rattling (windigo symptoms indicating fever, privation, and neurotic fury), so the old woman killed the baby boy."

So strong was Landes' commitment to a psychological interpretation of windigo that she failed to see that there might be reasons other than the belief in cannibal monsters for killing an infant in a family in which seven out of sixteen people had already died of starvation. Can a starving baby be etically categorized as being in a "neurotic fury"? (1938b:217). Is there any scientific basis for diagnosing infants as psychotic?

Referring to Landes' (1938a:25) two-stage progression from melancholia to obsessive murder-cannibalism, John Honigmann wrote: "It does not appear that Landes ever directly observed the progressive deterioration about which she writes" (1954:380). It would have been better for anthropology as well as for the global reputation of the Cree and Ojibwa Indians if Honigmann had shown less restraint in his commentary. As we have seen above, by the time he pursued this line of thought to its logical conclusion thirteen years later, no one was listening (Honigmann 1967:401).

If it can be said that Saindon knew the windigo at the first level of abstraction and Cooper, Hallowell, and Landes knew it at the second, then successive writers have typically known it at ever more remote levels of abstraction. Cooper, Landes, and especially Hallowell were accomplished fieldworkers, even if none of them ever observed a case of the ghoulish psychosis about which they wrote so confidently. Subsequent analysts have tended to be those who have either worked among highly acculturated reservation Indians, or, more commonly, have never seen a bush Indian in their lives.

Seymour Parker is an anthropologist at the University of Utah whose work has shown a strong psychiatric orientation. His paper "The Wiitiko Psychosis in the Context of Ojibwa Personality and Culture" (1960) is a prime example of windigo analysis at a third level of abstraction. Referring to the accounts of Hallowell, Landes, and Cooper, he writes: "Unfortunately, none of these investigators had an opportunity to obtain detailed or reliable life history data about an actual wiitiko victim" (1960:603). Neither did they obtain reliable case history data, as we have already seen. Having made his caveat, Parker embarks at once on a long, convoluted, neo-Freudian fishing trip. Accepting one of Landes' statements that windigo psychosis is confined mainly to men (Landes 1938a: 31), Parker ultimately concluded that windigo is an obsessive cannibalistic psychosis which is the result of frustrated dependency cravings of little Ojibwa boys for their stern and rejecting mothers. Following the ideas of Abram Kardiner (1939, 1953), he suggests that with frustration comes the transformation of the nurturing object into the persecuting object. Thus the prototype for the cannibal giant is the

mother figure. When "the victim feels that he has been possessed by the spirit of a cannibalistic wiitiko monster . . . he must serve the appetite of the wiitiko as his own" (Parker 1960:619). Parker stresses dependency as the salient feature of the Ojibwa modal personality. This presumably constitutes a predisposition to windigo insanity because "dependent and aggressive phantasies are often two sides of the same coin" (1960:612). At the same time he characterizes the Ojibwa as having excessive dependency needs, Parker calls our attention to Ojibwa individualism, apathy, passivity, and paranoia; traits that have been debated elsewhere under the category of Northern Algonkian social "atomism" (James 1954, 1970; Hickerson 1960, 1967; Barnouw 1963; Smith 1979).

In his 1957 doctoral dissertation in anthropology at the University of Toronto, Morton Teicher made an heroic attempt to compile all the available source material on windigo "psychosis." In addition to published sources he apparently had access to Hallowell's ethnographic field notes (Teicher 1960:74). Teicher's dissertation was later published by the American Ethnological Society (1960). The title of his monograph is "Windigo Psychosis: A Study of a Relationship between Belief and Behavior among the Indians of Northeastern Canada." The questionable assumption throughout is that there is a direct one-to-one causal connection between belief and behavior. "Belief stands in respect to behavior as does cause to effect" (1960:13).

In the seventy cases Teicher catalogues, acts of cannibalism were allegedly performed in forty-four, leaving twenty-six cases of "windigo" where, by the Indians' own accounts, no cannibalism took

place. At first Teicher is cautious in his analysis. "It is probable," he writes, "in some of these instances that cannibalism would have occurred had death [from execution] not intervened. On the other hand these twenty-six cases constitute a fairly high proportion of the total number of cases reported as windigo psychosis" (1960:109). But on the very next page, Teicher proceeds to ignore his own warning and states that cannibalism is "inevitable" in a person afflicted with windigo:

> A Northeastern Indian, convinced that he has become or is becoming windigo, inevitably turns to cannibalism as the appropriate behavior, an appropriateness determined by the cultural belief system. Regardless of the ailment he may actually have, once the common diagnosis of windigo has been applied, his future path of action is clearly demarcated by the culture; there is no alternative path (1960:110).

With the exception of Saindon's timid parishioner (1933:11-12), not one of Teicher's cases of "windigo psychosis" is drawn from a first-hand report. From the nature of Teicher's case material one must assume that had the man in Hearne's account been executed (1971 [1795]:34-35), and had the Cree version of the tale been recorded later by one less sophisticated than Hearne, that yet another instance of "windigo psychosis" would have been added to the literature. Almost all of Teicher's "cases" may be called into question on this account. Five of his seventy "cases" come from well-documented trial records (AAR 1903 [1904]; AAR 1907 [1908]), but Teicher's belief in the "inevitability" of cannibalism once the windigo label has been applied (1960:110) severely limits his capacity for critical analysis.

Raymond D. Fogelson is a former student of Hallowell's, now a professor of anthropology at the University of Chicago. In a Festschrift presented to Hallowell (Spiro 1965) Fogelson published his paper,

"Psychological Theories of Windigo 'Psychosis' and a Preliminary Application of Models Approach" (Fogelson 1965). This paper is a more cautious, and at the same time more ambitious, attempt to extrapolate on the windigo phenomenon at the third level of abstraction. Fogelson begins by saying that the windigo syndrome may have an organic etiology, but because there is insufficient data to generate, let alone test, specific physiological and genetic hypotheses, his report concentrates on psychological aspects of windigo (1965:74-75).

In referring to some early sources cited by Cooper (1934b), Fogelson makes a valuable contribution by pointing out that among the 18th-century Cree of Hudson Bay, Wiitiko appears to have been an Algonkian deity of evil principle. This malign god and his minions were a source of menace and danger to humans, and had always to be propitiated. Manitou, on the other hand, was a benign deity, but rather uninterested in human affairs (Fogelson 1965:76-77). Fogelson's paper is important in that he was the first to suggest that the windigo complex had changed over time. "Interesting to note is the absence in these early accounts of characteristics which were later associated with the Windigo being: as his gigantic stature, his anthropophageous propensities, and his symbolic connection with the north, winter, and starvation" (1965: 77; emphasis added). (Note also that Hearne makes no mention of the term in association with Cree beliefs surrounding cannibalism in the 1770s [1795:34-35]). Moreover, Fogelson points out that "the fact that only seventy fairly well-authenticated cases of windigo disorder have found their way into the literature—from a population of over thirty thousand over a period of three centuries—suggests strongly that

windigo disorder may be a relatively rare phenomenon, notable more for its spectacular features than for its chronicity" (ibid.:88).

In making these discerning statements Fogelson comes very close to scoring a major breakthrough in our understanding of the windigo phenomenon. In point of fact most of Teicher's cases are very poorly authenticated, and the few that are well documented Teicher systematically misinterprets. And, as we have seen above, in over 35% of Teicher's "cases" no cannabalism occurred even if we take the Indian acccounts at face value.

Unfortunately Fogelson chose not to pursue this line of thought and elected instead to psychologize and typologize. Expanding on a model developed by A. F. C. Wallace, himself, and unnamed others at the Eastern Pennsylvania Psychiatric Institute in 1959 (1965:89), Fogelson arranges the tenuous windigo data base into five conceptual slots. "The analytic technique has been labeled the 'N-U-P-model'" (1965:89) where N stands for "Normality," U for "Upset," and P for "Psychosis" (ibid.). Type 1 is the "Classic Three-Stage" windigo where the victim degenerates from a normal Indian to a brooding melancholic, to a cannibalistic killer (1965:90-91). Type 2 is the "Two-Stage" variety in which the sufferer is killed while "Upset" (1965:91-92). In Type 3 we get a "Nonmelancholic Two-Stage" in which the crafty cannibal does in his unsuspecting relatives and has them turning over a slow fire before they even have time to know that they have an Upset person on their hands (1965:93). In Type 4 the victim begins a transformation into a windigo as the result of a shaman's curse, but is cured through the ministrations of relatives (1965:94-96). In Type 5 a shaman begins to

become a windigo from the conjuring of a rival shaman, but fights off his enemy shamanistically and returns to Normality. Fogelson admits he had trouble in deciding whether to classify the shamanistic combat fantasy as an Upset or a Psychotic state, but opted for the latter (1965:97). Little confidence can be placed in Fogelson's diagnosis in view of the fact that trained psychiatrists on different sides of the Atlantic cannot agree as to what constitutes a psychotic state even when they have the opportunity to examine patients for extended periods of observation (Wing 1978:980139 passim).[3]

The next paper reviewed, "Hamburger Hoarding: A Case of Symbolic Cannibalism Resembling Whitico Psychosis" (Bolman and Katz 1966), demonstrates just how preposterous the windigo literature can get. This submission is the case history of a woman who, in addition to having other problems, hoarded food. She began by carrying around a cooked hot dog in her purse. Later she switched to raw hamburger. For two years she bought from 2 to 5 pounds of hamburger a day, then increased her purchases to about 60 pounds per day by her own estimate. (The authors do not say if they ever confirmed her statement by their own observations.) This she carried with her in her car and had trouble parting with it, even when it became rotten.[4] Needless to say the woman did not kill or eat anyone, nor did she even eat the raw hamburger. She did hesitatingly mention a fantasy impulse she had (once?) had: "While looking at a supermarket display of hamburger . . . she felt a sudden impulse to bury her face into this display full of meat and devour it" (1966:425). Evidently this was sufficient to convince the two psychiatrists who co-authored the paper that their patient was a "symbolic cannibal."

(Following this line of reasoning it might have been safer to conclude that the woman's fantasy about eating raw meat was an indication that she was a symbolic Eskimo. In fact, the authors twice identify those susceptible to windigo psychosis as "Cree Eskimos" [1966:424,427], a blunder they apparently reiterated from an earlier psychiatric paper [Arieti and Meth 1959:558].)

The patient was confined involuntarity to a mental hospital where she switched from hoarding hamburger to bread! Eventually the patient gave up hoarding food and was released. Note the close correspondence between the disturbed woman and her Algonkian counterpart: "Just as the Ojibwa hunter roamed the dark woods in search of prey, so the patient would spend night after night driving about the darkened streets of the city searching for open stores where she could buy hamburger" (1966:428). Right.

Windigo Psychosis, 1967-81

Also far removed from primary source data is Vivian Rohrl's attempt at an organic explanation (1970, 1972) and the responses to Rohrl's contribution (Brown, 1971; McGee 1972). Rohrl is an anthropologist at San Diego State University interested in culture and personality. Working from Teicher's "cases" and a letter from a Minnesota Chippewa informant, Rohrl (1970) suggests that the etiology of windigo psychosis might have a nutritional component. By this she does not refer to hunger as such, or to protein-calorie malnutrition. It appears that she thinks of windigo as being in part a deficiency disease—like beri-beri or pellagra—that can be cured by ingestion of fatty meats, particularly bear fat.

But Rohrl never specifies the missing nutrient or nutrients that bear fat might supply. In addition to the fat itself she suggests that "at least some proteins and B vitamins including thiamine" might be involved (1970:99). She goes on to state that "bear fat is believed to contain vitamin C, or ascorbic acid, probably derived from berries and other foods in their diets" (ibid.; italics added). Vitamin C is a water-soluble vitamin the inability of which to be stored in fat is the reason why humans and other primates need a constant supply. Vitamin C deficiency disease in humans is well known. It is called scurvy, not windigo psychosis. While victims of scurvy sometimes do show signs of psychological deterioration, compulsive murder-cannibalism is not one of the symptoms.

Rohrl never questions the reality of the assumption of a culture-specific, etic behavioral psychopathology. As H. F. McGee wrote: "That the . . . windigo melancholy may be caused by the absence of this enzyme or that vitamin is accepted. But why do these black-Irish fits manifest themselves as the windigo psychosis among the Northern Algonkians and not among their Dene, Siouan, Iroquoian, and Eskimo neighbors when the latter undergo similar nutritional deprivation?" (1972: 244).[5]

Why indeed? What neither Rohrl, McGee, nor anyone but Honigmann has suggested to date is if the windigo "psychosis" does not exist among these contiguous groups of people, perhaps it does not exist among the Northern Algonkians either. McGee of course deserves credit for pointing out the anomaly, but he tries to resolve it by positing the existence of a Windigo-like being in Northern Athapaskan mythology.

This has merit (cf. Ridington 1976), but sheds light only indirectly on the issue of the existence or nonexistence of culture-bound etic behavioral psychopathologies.

Brown (1971) rejects Rohrl's suggestion on the grounds that the attempt to cure windigos by feeding them fat was rare, and that when it was undertaken it was not done nutritively but emetically, in order for the victim to be able to disgorge the intrusive heart of ice (cf. Bloomfield 1934:155; McGee 1975:114). Although Brown questions the idea of a nutritive cure for windigo, her main quarrel with Rohrl turns out to be over the issue of Northern Algonkian rationality. Rohrl believes the Indians subliminally grasped the importance of fat as a remedy while Brown holds that they were attempting to administer a psychological cathartic when they bothered with the bear fat at all. But like Rohrl, Brown never questions the etic behavioral reality of windigo psychosis.

Brown has made a valuable contribution to the windigo question in her discovery of a letter by the Methodist missionary Egerton Ryerson Young, dated Rossville, Norway House, July 29, 1971 (Brown 1871: 21). Young wrote of an event that occurred about 100 miles away from the post. A 15-year-old Cree boy was alleged to have gone crazy "and his ravings kept asking for flesh to eat. At last he said, 'I will surely kill somebody and eat them if I can!' One day he attacked his father and tried hard to bite him. The father and an elder brother of the crazy one then deliberately strangled him and burnt the body to ashes" (E. R. Young 1871:37, quoted in Brown 1971:21). Brown cites Young to make the point that the "windigo" victim was strangled and cremated rather than fed hot bear grease, but more important than this

are Young's comments that follow. "Poor boy, he was only a lunatic, and perhaps a few months in an asylum would have restored reason to its throne. I took my canoe and went and visited the family. [They had since come in to the settlement.] They are now in deep sorrow at what they have so rashly done" (1871:37).

The reader is entitled to an interpretation of the quoted passages different from the one I am about to make, but what it says to me is that a mentally ill boy was killed by his family. The story has a ring of implausibility to it. Note the phrase "tried hard to bite," implying that the boy was unsuccessful in his attempt to bite his father. How is is possible for a crazed 15-year-old male to fail at least to get in a nip while "attacking?" The Northern Algonkians are not immune to mental illness. No one disputes the fact that they fall victim to psychiatric disorders at at least the rate of other populations. The question is, what are the options open to a small family hunting group in the vast boreal hinterland in dealing with a disruptive or burdensome individual? Young was one of many early observers who never doubted what seemed to them to be an obvious fact: The windigo belief complex was an ideological and superstructural rationalization for homicide; i.e., the execution of the alleged "windigo." It was not until the anthropological writings of the early 1930s that the balance shifted in favor of an explanation that held the executed parties responsible for having brought death upon themselves through their cannibalistic frenzy.

An example of the numerous references that can be cited in support of this fact is a letter written by John Kennedy McDonald (1907), a retired chief trader with the Hudson's Bay Company, to the editor of the Manitoba Free Press regarding the windigo execution of Wasakapeequay by the Fiddler brothers:

> I lived among these people for 35 years and never locked my door unless when going on a distant trip. I have again to say that had there been an asylum or doctor near by that the band would have been only too glad to hand over the unfortunate woman, as once off their hands the men could leave to hunt and provide for their families, which they could not do when they had to watch her.

A demented or delirious person cannot be loaded into a birchbark canoe, and is a distinct liability on hunting trips.

Rohrl's (1972) rejoinder to Brown deepens the confusion. She cautions "Jennifer Brown who quotes Young (1871) . . . to consider the source" (1972:243). It is not clear if by this statement Rohrl means to impeach the reliability of missionary sources in general or that of Egerton Ryerson Young in particular. Assuming the latter it must be noted that Young wrote a series of popular books that contain obvious exaggerations and a fair amount of 19th-century sensationalism. But what is Rohrl's point? Is it that the boy was not killed, or that he was fed hot bear fat as a specific for windigo possession and Young failed to report the treatment? Her statement that "cultural phenomena, including windigo psychosis, are multifactorial" (1972: 243) is a truism that accepts the existence of the culture-bound psychopathology as a demonstrated fact. Five years earlier John Honigmann had suggested strongly that this is an unwarranted assumption (1967:401). Close scrutiny of the archives yields evidence of an etic and behavioral nature that documents the correctness of Honigmann's suggestion.

Almost as distant from the etic behavioral data base as Bolman and Katz (1966) is Thomas Hay's paper, "The Windigo Psychosis: Psychodynamic, Cultural, and Social Factors in Aberrant Behavior" (1971). Hay, a psychological anthropologist at the University of Missouri at

St. Louis, defends the position that "the dynamics of the windigo disorder are essentially similar to the psychodynamics which apparently produce ritual cannibalism in some societies" (1971:1). By this he asks us to believe that funerary endocannibalism, the eating of parts of slain (or living) enemies, and windigo "psychosis" all have their origins in the same cannibalistic "impulse."

Hay postulates the existence of a cannibal impulse on the imputed desire people have to resolve the following problems cannibalistically: "(1) 'preserving' a relationship with some loved one who has been 'lost,' (2) 'solving' ambivalent feelings toward some one, or (3) acquiring some property, such as vitality or courage" (1971:3). Is this cannibal impulse pan-human? On this subject Hay equivocates. From what he says we must assume that had the Ojibwa and Cree behaved in a civilized manner and taken the trouble to develop symbolic expressions of the cannibal impusle (e.g. the Christian Eucharist) they would have been spared the necessity of killing and eating each other (1971:4). (Hay's model would lead us to the conclusion that the atavistic symbolic expression of the Hamburger Hoarder's cannibal impulse was refined in therapy to a farinaceous form more appropriate to a member of an advanced civilization.)

The Northern Algonkians, according to Hay, must act on their cannibal impulse by means of an obsessive-compulsive psychosis because (1) they attach extraordinary importance to following one's dreams without consulting others, and (2) they lack "alternative patterns for displacing cannibal desires from members of the band and expressing them symbolically" (1971:8). According to Hay, "the typical personality

of the Northern Algonkians is such that most people should be expected to have deeply hidden cannibalistic impulses, the presence of which would tend to produce fear in the presence of a person struggling to control his own heightened cannibalistic tendencies" (1971:14).

Why should we expect the Northern Algonkians to be especially endowed with "cannibalistic impulses"? Hay does not enlighten us on this subject, although he begins his paper with the statement "to the Indians, the desire to eat human flesh was incomprehensible except as the result of sorcery or possession by the mythical windigo spirit" (1971:1). This is simply untrue. The Indians comprehend crisis cannibalism very well, Hay's condescension notwithstanding.[6] Hay believes that European chroniclers of the windigo phenomenon skewed their reports in such a way as to overemphasize the importance of starvation.

> The importance of the patterns of cannibalistic behavior available to the folklore of a society is indicated by the apparent distortions of events in the reports of the windigo cases by the Whites who recorded them. In our folklore, cannibalism is a last resort in famine and is used minimally to sustain life until other sources of food can be found. This pattern in Western folklore is so strong that the Whites who recorded these cases attributed second and later acts of cannibalism to starvation although no indication is given of any effort to obtain any food but human flesh and one recorded case even reports waste of some parts of one victim. (1971:10)

Hay believes that while we practice cannibalism only as a last resort, Algonkian Indians do it as the fulfillment of a basic "impulse"; an impulse they have especially strongly either as a racial characteristic or because they lack the wit to invent symbolic safety valves that would enable them to vent their cannibalistic impulses harmlessly. And not only are the Northern Algonkians inveterate people-eaters, according to Hay, but he hints that they are sloppy and wasteful about it in the bargain.

Hay (1971:5) cites Teicher (1960:91) who in turn refers to Ballantyne (1848:50-55) who recounts a story in which a starving mother kills her child and eats it. The data base for this tale is extremely poor, and Hay's interpretation of the available data is questionable, but let us for the moment assume that the facts of the case were as he assumes them to be. Does this justify the following conclusion? "It seems probable that this act was motivated at least as much by the desire to keep the relationship with the child as by hunger. If not, why should the woman not have begun with someone less dear?" (Hay 1971:5). Hay writes from the comfortable perspective of someone who has never faced a food crisis. The assumption that children are the most "dear" under such circumstances is an ethnocentric prejudice not supported by anthropological evidence (see Turnbull 1972, 1978 for an extreme example; also West 1824:128). An ethnographic grounding indicates that if the child were eaten at all it was because he or she was most helpless and least able to resist, or because it was most expendable in terms of group survival, and not because it was most dear. Hay's thesis that the Cree and Ojibwa kill and eat their loved ones in order to preserve a relationship or to eliminate frustrating interpersonal feelings demeans and belittles the privations these people had to endure, their sufferings being in part the result of the fur trade and other European disruptions.

An interesting paper based on original interviews is J. Anthony Paredes' "A Case Study of a 'Normal' Windigo" (1972). In 1966 Paredes, now at Florida State University, set about taping the life history of an elderly Minnesota woman of mixed Chippewa and Euro-American ancestry.

> Her father was a White lumberjack and camp cook; her mother was Chippewa and died before the informant can recollect. She spent her childhood in her maternal grandmother's house; also in the household were her "step-grandfather" and her mother's sister. Her father occasionally saw her but on the whole had little interaction with her (Paredes 1972:99)

The woman had lived a difficult life. She was not well treated by her maternal relatives and in her earlier years experienced a recurrent dream in which she was being chased by a giant. The giant failed to catch her, however, because in her dream she was protected by twelve men. She fled from the giant and took refuge with an old woman who welcomed her warmly and fed her, after which the little girl went out and gathered money which she gave to the kind old woman. In her dream the little girl was also allowed to gather up all the clothing she wanted to wear.

The little girl (now an old woman herself and telling her life story to the anthropologist) stated that the giant who chased her in her dreams had two names: Misabe and "wendiigo" (1972:102). Misabe quite literally means "giant" in Ojibwa. As a hero in folklore Misabe is an enemy of Windigo, and sometimes a slayer of windigowak. Paredes goes to some effort in trying to explain why his informant combined the two legendary personages in her dream. He suggests that the composite giant might represent her step-grandfather (1972:105), her father (1972:106), her policeman uncle (1972:106), her dead mother (1972:106), her first husband (1972:107), and several white people she had known as a child (a school superintendent's wife, a steamboat engineer, a male school employee [1972:107]), or some combination of the above.

Paredes classifies his informant as a "normal windigo" and believes that the case of Mrs. F. "show[s] that Teicher's [1960] assertion that windigo belief causes windigo behavior is simply untrue and

does not hold at the individual level" (personal communication 1981). At the same time Paredes points out that an application of his data to Fogelson's (1965) N-U-P model illustrates the fact that an individual can be "upset" by windigo fantasies, yet never progress to a "Psychotic" state, and in fact remain essentially "Normal" (personal communication, 1981).

I agree with Paredes, but suggest that the case of Mrs. F. has something far more direct to tell us. The works of Saindon (1933:11-12), Landes (1937a:56, 1938a:30), Honigmann (1967:401), Ridington (1976:109, 126, 128), and Preston (1980:124-129) all indicate in different ways that "windigo" is a much more inclusive mental and phenomenological category of the Northern Algonkians than the cannibal-psychotic obsession of anthropological renown. My own field experiences confirm and amplify the thoughts of these writers.

Among the Northern Ojibwa of the 1970s, "almost turning to windigo" meant something very close to the following English phrases: being driven to distraction, being overcome with grief, being out of one's mind from worry, being at one's wit's end. Sometimes this involved the idea (or the transitory behavior) of wandering away from the village into the forest and, in rare cases, the concept of being assumed into the sky to wander wraithlike between heaven and earth. Never in these modern contexts did I hear the word associated with cannibalism or aggression, but of course conditions and concepts change over time. Starvation is no longer a threat, and village life has for the most part replaced the semi-nomadic hunting and trapping cycle. Mentally impaired individuals no longer pose a danger to group survival. Treatment by

nurses, physicians, and mental-health professionals is often available, and serious cases are flown out to hospitals (see Armstrong and Patterson 1975: Goldthorpe 1977; T. K. Young n.d.). The cannibal theme may be less important than it once was, but the work of Saindon and Landes (op. cit.) provides evidence that the features of the windigo belief complex I observed in the 1970s survive virtually intact from an earlier period.

Paredes' characterization of Mrs. F. as a "normal windigo" is not the contradiction in terms it first appears to be, but lends support to my thesis that windigos as individuals within a category of persons are more "normal" than we thought. Certainly they are much more "normal" than what the bulk of anthropological writing on the subject would lead us to believe. And that, of course, is the main point of my dissertation.

Paredes' tongue-in-cheek attempt to link Mrs. F.'s dreams to deeply repressed cannibalistic urges via Ojibwa folklore (1972:110-111) is an exercise in irony not relevant to the question of whether windigo psychosis is etically real. Yet Paredes' search for an explanation for the Windigo-Misabe dream composite leads him to some very sound and valuable conclusions. He shows that a close examination of woodland Ojibwa folklore and the folklore of the related Plains Ojibwa and Plains Cree reveals that the name Windigo (or its cognates) is applied to a surprisingly wide range of mythological figures (1972:107-108). Paredes believes the evidence suggests that "considered in its broadest ethnological context, the windigo idea of mythology has complex associations with other characters, has benign even comical aspects, and,

thus, cannot be summarily dismissed by simple characterization as a cannibalistic monster" (1972:108). Paredes, then, makes a geographical contribution to the literature similar to the one made by Fogelson (1965:76-77) on the temporal plane. Together they show that the Windigo complex is remarkably flexible in space and time. Their work suggests that the ideational configuration of windigo as a cannibal spirit-monster capable of taking possession of human bodies may be limited to rather specific sets of infrastructural contexts in the history of the Northern Algonkian peoples. (The specificity of these contexts will be examined in the following chapter.)

Paredes also goes on to caution against allowing culturological explanations to supersede situational explanations, especially when we must deal with fantasy material from other societies (1972:112). Paredes (1972:112) quotes Malinowski to the effect that in anthropology we often "neglect somewhat those elemental phases of human existence, just because they seem to be obvious and generally human, non-sensational and non-problematic" (Malinowski 1960 [1944]:72). This admonition is just as valid today as it was when it was first written.

Paredes also provides us with the following important insight:

> Secondly, the data presented here indicate that the whole complex of windigo belief may need reexamination. Is, for example, the windigo lore of southern Ojibwa significantly different from that of the sub-Arctic? What have been the effects of several centuries of acculturation on the windigo syndrome? How is it that the horrible cannibal monster is terminologically identified with the ludicrous clown-shamans of the plains Ojibwa and plains Cree [Skinner 1914:500-505, 528-529; Mandelbaum 1940: 274-275]? What relationship does the windigo idea have to other folklore characters—is windigo a character, a <u>characterization</u>, or both? Precise answers to these and related questions should provide important insights into our understanding of "windigo." (Paredes 1972:112-113; italics in the original)

Here Paredes is clearly on the right track.

The windigo and the infrastructure were closely linked in a splendid paper by Charles Bishop of the State University of New York at Oswego, an Algonkianist ethnohistorian working in the theoretical tradition of Stewardian cultural ecology, and former student of the Marxist ethnohistorian Harold Hickerson. Bishop (1975) suggests that while belief in an evil deity called Windigo may have been aboriginal (cf. Fogelson 1965:76-77), the emergence of the windigo complex as we have come to know it is the result of disruptions and depletions caused by the fur trade.

"Teicher (1960:107) cites two incidents occurring during the 17th century among the Montagnais as conclusive evidence of the aboriginal existence of Windigo psychosis" (Bishop 1975:239). For the first case Bishop shows that "by the 1630's the subsistence base of the Montagnais near Tadoussac and Three Rivers [Quebec] had been drastically disrupted by trade and environmental depletion, processes that had been going on for at least 100 years" (1975:239-240). The second case was reputed to have occurred near Lake St. John in the winter of 1660-61. "There the Indian deputies of the Jesuits were supposedly seized with madness and a desire for human flesh for which they were put to death by others" (1975:242). Bishop notes that the Jesuits expressed doubt about the veracity of the report at the time, and continued with their missionary activities undeterred (1975:242). He also points out that "the deputies had gone to summon Indians who resided near James Bay. This would threaten the trade monopoly of the Lake St. John Indians. They may have spread the rumor to prevent the Jesuits from continuing on their journey; or they may actually have

murdered the deputies lest they reach the Indians to the north" (1975: 242).[7]

Bishop speaks of regional and episodic faunal depletions and holds that starvation became a much more serious danger for the North Algonkians in the 19th century than formerly. The 19th century was a period of peak windigo activity, although I must concede that it is possible that the phenomenon was simply better reported then than in earlier centuries. "Despite the horror and repugnance expressed by Indians, the data demonstrate that cannibalism was potentially normal [for them, as it is for everyone] in an abnormal situation in the face of starvation" (1975:246). Thus changing infrastructural conditions interacting with a constantly evolving belief system "gave rise to the practice of killing actual or potential HUMAN Windigos with no necessity to justify the act" (1975:247; emphasis Bishop's).

Yet for all the merits of his paper, Bishop is another who fails to question the etic/behavioral reality of the obsessive-compulsive cannibal psychosis. "It is . . . necessary," he writes, "to distinguish between famine cannibalism and Windigo cannibalism: The former occurs under conditions of extreme famine; the latter may be exhibited in times of plenty as well as during food shortages" (1975:246). Bishop (1975:244) finds Speck's (1935:43) argument convincing that famine cannibalism could lead to windigo cannibalism at a later date. As has been said above (passim), a close reading of original sources does not support a belief in the etic-behavioral existence of windigo cannibalism in any form.

Leo Waisberg's (1975) attempt to refute an earlier paper by Bishop (1973) on the grounds that starvation could occur under pre-contact conditions is unsuccessful because Bishop's position (and mine, which is not identical) does not hinge on the existence of an aboriginal Algic arcadia, but on the fact that conditions grew appreciably more difficult and unstable for these Indians as the fur-trade period progressed. I speak here not only of nutrition, but also of epidemiology and demography.

James G. E. Smith's paper, "Notes on the Wittiko" (1976) presents a more serious challenge to the historical interpretations favored by Bishop and me. Smith, who worked among the Rocky Cree of northern Manitoba and Saskatchewan (1976:25), argues that "the ecological dynamics of the aboriginal Subarctic environment west of Hudson Bay offered the necessary preconditions for the entire Wittiko complex of cannibal giant and psychosis" (1976:28). My major point is that the Northern Algonkians have used the Windigo cannibal theme to scapegoat or otherwise divest themselves of the sick, the weak, the marginal, and the disruptive under trying circumstances. Whether they have been doing this since time immemorial or only in the post-contact period is of secondary importance.

Much more threatening to my thesis is Smith's contention that psychotic windigo cannibalism can be documented "amidst abundant game" (1976:22; italics Smith's). Because this is such a serious challenge to my position I feel compelled to quote Smith's documentation in full, which comes from the Hudson's Bay Company "post journal of Fort Churchill in February 1741 (HBC Archives B 43/a/22)" (ibid.):

> February . . . Down y^e^ river two Indian [Cree] women, in a most miserable Condition of hunger, one of them is y^e^ mother of y^e^ other & they relate y^e^ following Tragical Story, y^e^ daughter had a husband & 3 Children, & was one of our goose Hunters Spring & fall Sometime last month this family was in such a Starved Condition that y^e^ man murthered his youngest Child & Eat it, And in 4 Days after he murthered his Closest Son who was about 12 Years of age, the women fearing he would murder them all they Left him w^th^ y^e^ dead Boy, taking w^th^ them their Second Child w^ch^ was a girl about 7 or 8 years old, & made for y^e^ factory, they then being about 150 miles Distance from hence, 3 Days after he pursued them and Coming up w^th^ them he Endeavoured to arrest y^e^ Girl from y^e^ mother but both y^e^ Women Endeavouring to preserve y^e^ Child, he throatled it in it's mothers hands & after that Seized his wife to Murder her also, but y^e^ two women over Come him & his wife Knocked him on y^e^ head w^th^ a hatchet after they had Slue him they Buried him & his Daughter together under y^e^ Snow & came for y^e^ factory & in 16 Days time they got here, what is very Surprising at y^e^ time of this Disaster there was Plenty of Deer [caribou] about them & he had amunition & might have Kild Venison w^ch^ his family Strongly Desired him to do, but he gave no manner of Care to their Sollicitations but his mind seemed to be fixed upon what is above related, y^e^ Subsistence y^e^ women got to bring them forward, was for Severall Days Deer Dung w^ch^ they Picked up and Desolved in warm water & So Drank it till at length providence flung in their way y^e^ Scraps of Deer that y^e^ wolves had Killed & Left. . . .

For purposes of argument I will assume that the HBC Chronicler was proficient in Cree and recorded the women's story essentially as they told it. The veracity of the women then becomes the central issue. If they were telling the truth their story is very damaging to my position. After 240 years it is probably not possible to say with any degree of certainty what the truth of the matter was. Although they may have been telling the truth, I would like to suggest an alternative interpretation.

It is agreed by all that the events at issue began when "this family was in . . . a Starved Condition" (1976:22). The reasons for the starvation situation are open to question. The surviving women state that the situation developed because the man ignored their pleas

to hunt the abundant caribou, being preoccupied with thoughts of mayhem and cannibalism. But Smith himself makes the case that the ecological dynamics of the Subarctic were such that famine was an ever-present danger, even in pre-contact times (1976:27-31).

I think it is possible that starvation conditions developed in this situation because the man had a run of bad luck. A hunter can go into a "slump" for many reasons: an injury, an illness, scarcity of game, or simple misfortune. It is suspicious to me that the women were only able to overpower and kill the man after he had allegedly throttled the third child in the arms of its mother, especially since—according to them—he had been living on flesh while they had been making do on dissolved caribou dung. If the women were lying, the following scenario suggests itself: Starvation conditions developed because, for whatever reasons, the man was unsuccessful in the hunt. The women—mother and daughter—were the initiators of the homicides and the cannibalism. They survived to tell the tale and their version was accepted. Here again, as in so many cases, it is the story of the killers of the alleged windigo that is handed down. The stories of the executed parties are lost to posterity. We will probably never be certain of the facts in this case, but what is certain is that the conceptualization Smith employed to analyze the data needs to be refined. For Smith "the Wittiko 'psychosis' or disorder . . . involved an individual believing that he or she is or is becoming a Wittiko, or the belief of others that he or she is exhibiting characteristic Wittiko and non-human behavior. In extreme form, the individual actually becomes a cannibal, killing and eating his victims" (1976:20; italics added).

By thus failing to distinguish the emics of thought from the etics of behavior, Smith opens a veritable Pandora's box. Are the diagnostic features of windigo "psychosis" to be found in equal measure in the behavior of the "psychotics" and the minds of the social authorities? Is there any scientific justification for classifying people as they appear in the nightmares and fantasies of their accusers? (cf. Harris 1974:214, 221, 235, 251).

Anthropologist David H. Turner of the University of Toronto is a structuralist who has made a very curious addition to the windigo literature. From his observations at Shamattawa, Manitoba, Turner correctly concludes that Cree social organization is "incorporative" (Turner and Wertman 1977; Turner 1978). For Turner the incorporation of individuals into Cree social groupings is symbolically analogous to the incorporation of individuals cannibalistically (Turner 1977).

Turner contrasts Cree social organization with that of the Australian aboriginies,[8] and in doing so he constructs a typological dichotomy that describes, according to Turner, "two hunter and gatherer ways of life as they probably existed prior to modification by Europeans" (Turner 1978:195; italics Turner's). The Australians group themselves into totemic, exogamous clans on the exclusionary principle: a person cannot belong to more than one clan and remains in the birth clan throughout the life cycle. With the Cree, however, "outsiders could be incorporated into the band through residence and work association, and required no prior kinship, marriage, or symbolic ties to be acceptable as in Australia" (Turner 1978:202). Space does not permit a full treatment here of Turner's binary model, the components of which

he has named "production group unity" (e.g. Cree) and "production group diversity" (e.g. Australian), but it merits our attention. Let it be sufficient here to say that Turner's claim that such systems, once established, are relatively unresponsive to variations in population and resources (1978:210) required careful diachronic verification by means of a sample drawn from a universe larger than two.

For Turner, cannibalism in Cree folklore "is taken as a metaphor for incorporation into (becoming part of) a social grouping, the various acts and relations described in the story can be seen as attempts at mediating opposed tendencies toward autonomy at the domestic, brotherhood and band levels" (Turner 1977:65).

It is difficult to counter structuralist arguments with etic/behavioral and materialist refutations because structuralism concerns itself above all with mental sets. The study of mental sets seems at first to be a goal worthy of some effort—comparable and related to learning the languages of the people we study—until we realize that it is not necessarily the mental structures of the natives that are explicated by the structuralist. To the structuralist "it is in the last resort immaterial whether . . . the thought processes of the South American Indians take shape through the medium of my thoughts, or whether mine take place through the medium of theirs" (Levi-Strauss 1969:13; quoted in Harris 1979:169). Turner himself has told me that ideas are "created" and need not be accounted for. Who then, creates the ideas? Turner concedes that in the last analysis he does not know where he gets his structures, and that maybe he gets them "from God" (personal communication 1980). He was not joking.

For these reasons we are fortunate to have the critique of phenomenologist Richard J. Preston of McMaster University. Professor Preston has done extensive fieldwork among the James Bay Cree and has specialized in studying the emics of Northern Algonkian mental life. Preston writes:

> [Turner's] use of the structural theory and the metaphorically extended notion of incorporation highlights, in my opinion, our tendency to overpower a very poorly known Witiko phenomenon with our own intellectual creations. The problems of translating the Algonkian idiom of experience into terms that are understandable and worthwhile within our own tradition of urbane intellectual inquiry is poorly served by psychodynamic and structuralist theories, unless the effort includes the judicious use of Algonkian phenomena. Both Hay and Turner, in my opinion, have created intellectual monstrosities in imposing elegant arguments upon dubious data. (Preston 1980:120)

Again it must be stressed that the data to which Preston refers are the emic/mental Algonkian data. When etic/behavioral and historical data are added to this, the case against conventional interpretations of the windigo phenomenon is overwhelming. (We will hear from Preston again below.)

It seems at first puzzling that Turner's analysis of the windigo—which is one of the most involuted ever written—was produced by an anthropologist who has actually done fieldwork (albeit of brief duration) among the Northern Cree. The lesson to be learned here is that exposure to primary data source opportunities does not often lead to valid conclusions when inadequate research strategies are employed.

Turner's contribution reveals the most serious weakness of structuralism: its ahistorical and antievolutionary synchrony. He contends that Cree social organization is one of at least two hunter-gatherer production group types that probably survive without modification in

pre-contact form (1978:195). Windigo myths, in turn, provide "clues to the kinds of social structures possessed by the Algonkians, both in the recent past and in the more distant past—perhaps even in the pre-Cartier past" (Turner 1977:71). A growing literature addresses the issue of possible post-contact changes in the social structures of various Algonkian groups, but that is beyond the scope of this review. More to the point is the question of whether Algonkian religion, especially the windigo belief complex as expressed in the Cree oral tradition, has undergone temporal change. As we have seen in the previous section, Fogelson's work gives a strong indication that it has changed, and that the Windigo figure was probably not associated with anthropophagy until the end of the 18th century (1965:76-77). And for Algonkian groups to the south, ethnohistorian Charles Bishop tells us:

> Nowhere in the early Jesuit accounts relating to the Ojibwa and Ottawa is there a specific devil form recognizable as the Windigo, a rather remarkable fact considering the apparent preoccupation in the nineteenth century with the phenomenon. (1975:244)

This is especially remarkable considering the Jesuits' natural interest in religious matters.

The stories on which Turner bases his analysis were collected circa 1970 at Sandy Lake, Ontario (Ray and Stevens 1971). As will be shown in Chapters III and IV, the Sandy Lake "Cree" (actually a Northern Ojibwa group) underwent a severe nutritional and demographic crisis in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. A materialist analysis predicts that this situation would be reflected in their folklore (Marx and Engels 1977 [1846]:47). This proves to be the case. One of the stories, "The Death of Pecequan," is the mythologized form of an

actual windigo execution and its aftermath that took place in 1906 (AAR 1907 [1908]; PAC 1907-08 [RG 13, c1, vol. 1452]; PAC 1907-09 [RG 18, vol. 3229, file HQ-681-G1). A close examination of the archival data strongly indicates that the story as collected by Ray and Stevens (1971:128-129) and cited by Turner (1977:68) is one of the most recent—and perhaps one of the final—manifestations in the process identified by Fogelson (1965: 76-77).

A more ingenuous use of the structuralist paradigm is Harold Franklin McGee's "The Windigo Down-East or the Taming of the Windigo" (1975). McGee does a structural analysis of an unusual Micmac myth collected in 1859 (Rand 1894:190-199). In this myth (briefly summarized) "Cheenoo"—the Micmac homologue of Windigo—is found in a distant northwestern forest by a family, the members of which treat him with care and affection rather than with fear and revulsion. Through their nurturance Cheenoo gradually becomes more human and less monstrous. After killing an enemy Cheenoo with the aid of his new "son-in-law," Cheenoo accompanies the family southeast to Micmacland (McGee 1975: 113-117).

> The farther south they go the weaker Cheenoo becomes. When they reach their village he is nearly dead. He has been transformed to look like an old but whole man. He has become human but he is not a Christian. A priest is sent for and he instructs Cheenoo. Cheenoo listens, is baptised, then dies in the Catholic faith. (1975:117)

McGee's central contention is that "the windigo myth functioned to define the concept of human personness for the northeastern Algonkians" (1975:113). (A similar thought is expressed by Fogelson [1980: 148].) This is an entirely reasonable suggestion, but McGee does not follow up on his own insights. McGee believes that "what is needed is

an attempt to understand the windigo with respect to the mentally balanced, rather than to the psychotic" (1975:112). With this I heartily concur, but from an etic-behavioral perspective we cannot assign as high a priority to the effort of understanding how cultures transform monsters into humans as we must to the more urgent problem of understanding how cultures transform humans into social monsters. When, why, and under what circumstances are human beings socially redefined as non-persons, thus legitimizing their persecution and possible execution? How is the Northern Algonkian process of divesting individuals of their humanity similar to or different from those of other groups? Can predictive or retrodictive generalizations be made cross-culturally? I will return to these questions in Chapter V.

Culturological treatments of the windigo complex are often supported by the claim that the Northern Athapaskan Indians who share the boreal forest with their Northern Algonkian neighbors lack a cultural configuration comparable to the windigo (e.g. Parker 1960:618-619). This claim is used to counter ecological and historical explorations into the windigo curiosity. Robin Ridington of the University of British Columbia has written a thoughtful and thought-provoking paper entitled "Wechuge and Windigo: A Comparison of Cannibal Belief Among Boreal Forest Athapaskans and Algonkians" (1976). In his paper Ridington shows that the belief systems of these two macrogroups of Subarctic Indians are not as different as they may seem, and that the windigo as we have come to know it may be an artifact of our own projections (a point also made by Preston [1980:117-118]) as well as the result of the unique culture history of the Northern Algonkians since the 16th century.

The Athapaskan Beaver Indians (Dunne-za) of the Peace River district believe in a personage they call Wechuge. Wechuge, like Windigo, is an invincible, ice-gutted cannibal who eats his own lips as a preliminary to more substantial fare. In Dunne-za cosmology Wechuge is associated with giant animals who hunted people in the mythic past, but now "it is these giant People-eaters who confer supernatural power to the child on his or her vision quest. Contact with this power gives a person the ability to find and tranform animals into food" (Ridington 1976:109). Wechuge exists as a legendary figure who tracks people down, kills them and eats them (1976:110-114), but ordinary people too can "become Wechuge" (1976:114-123). Unlike becoming windigo, where the victim is possessed by an entity alien to him or her (sometimes as the result of an enemy's curse), becoming Wechuge occurs when one loses control of one's own supernatural power from the violation of a taboo. (For example, people with "Frog power" cannot eat flyblown meat; people with "Spider power" cannot hear any sound made by a stretched string.)

Becoming Wechuge, then, means becoming "too strong." People in the transformation phase are "cured" by the application of their own "medicine" and the "medicine" of others. If a person is not cured the mythological precedent is for the victim to be killed and the body burned in order to melt the visceral ice and to prevent the body from returning to life. To Ridington's knowledge, things have never come to such a pass among the Dunne-za. As for actual "Wechuge cannibalism," Ridington heard of one case that was supposed to have happened late in the 19th century (1976:115). We do not know how much credence to give this or, if it did in fact happen itwas a case of starvation cannibalism.

Assuming for the time being that these correspondences between Northern Athapaskan and Northern Algonkian belief systems are not the result of diffusion, what can we make of them? Ridington has observed:

> The diagnosis of Windigo behavior as psychotic has not been seriously questioned in the literature even though all authors recognize that in none of the reported cases has there been first-hand information on individual case histories let alone analysis of subject's lives by observers with experience in psychiatric diagnosis (1976:107-108). Our labelling system when applied to the windigo phenomenon breaks down on close examination. We label the behavior of windigo actor as psychotic but not the beliefs of those who accept his role as real. (1976:128)

These are good insights and Ridington follows up on them. While taking note of other possibilities he suggests that the belief systems of these two groups of boreal forest Indians on the cannibal theme may have started out similarly, and then diverged in historic times. "In general the Algonkians have experienced a longer period of disruptive influence from contact with Europeans than the Dunne-za" (1976:126). "It seems significant that the story of Tsekute, the only actual person said to have become a cannibal Wechuge, occurred at a time of maximum social upheaval and was linked to the elaboration of the Plateau Prophet Dance as described by Spier (1935) among the Dunne-za" (1976:125). Ridington's paper is a valuable preliminary to Chapters III and IV which testify to this long period of disruptive influence on the Northern Algonkians, and provide documentary evidence that challenges the etic/behavioral existence of windigo as a cannibalistic psychosis. He is also to be commended for pointing out that witch-fear (including the belief in cannibal monsters) is symptomatic of societies under stress; a theme to which we will return shortly.

To the best of my knowledge the only Algonkianist to have benefitted directly from Honigmann's scholarship on the subject of the windigo is his former student, Richard J. Preston of McMaster University. Preston, who also had the advantage of being Honigmann's research assistant when Personality in Culture was in preparation (Honigmann 1967:xii), has written a stimulating and engaging paper entitled "The Witiko: Algonkian Knowledge and Whiteman Knowledge" (1980). Preston's main point is that

> the Witiko psychosis in the literature is not a very adequate approximation to the Algonkian emotional dynamics or to the great variability in Algonkian oral tradition on this topic. (1980:128)

Preston believes it to be manifestly clear that in both Algonkian and western cultures, the experts fail to agree on the nature of the windigo phenomenon (1980:127).

> Apparently while some Algonkians are prepared to accept the possibility of the monstrous, some Algonkianists prefer to tacitly assert the necessity of fantasy and then to exaggerate with false concreteness some aspects of symbolic implication they have culled for this purpose from a variety of narratives (1980:127). I concur with Honigmann and Ridington that, on the evidence, the case has not been made for Witiko belief and behaviour being diagnosed as a psychosis, although particular aspects of Witiko may be components of some individuals' psychological dysfunction. Nor can [Witiko] be realistically accepted as a category of persons, unless we can specify a category with boundaries allowing frequent realignment and with a content allowing great variance and transformative potential. (Preston 1980:128)

About the "psychosis" Preston writes:

> We have made the diagnosis without seeing the patient. . . . Some kind of compulsion and transformation is believed in by Northern Algonkians, but their words are too often taken as literal (rather than imagic or symbolic) representations of events, which we then use to construct our definition of a Witiko psychopathology (1980:112). . . . It seems that we have taken an exotic notion out of its native context of the images of terror, and with much seriousness we have overinterpreted the meagre data. (1980:114)

Referring to Cooper (1933), Hallowell (1936), and Landes (1938a), Preston writes: "One has the sense that these scholars (and later ones) in treating of the Witiko, suspended their normal standards of critical and judicious interpretation, being for some reason drawn to make imaginative suggestions without a positive factual basis" (1980:114). Preston asks if transplanted Europeans have been "simply finding the familiar in exotic settings . . . [for] the Wild Man of the wilderness, often a hairy and solitary being who lurks just out of sight, is one of the oldest and most persistent folk beliefs in Western culture" (1980:117).

In an attempt to account for Euro-North American fascination with a very poorly documented windigo, Preston constructs a satirical model that parodies psychiatric and structural explanations, and calls it "Witiko and Psychic Unity" (1980:118).

> The Witiko psychosis is an Algonkian re-enactment of Freud's primal parricide. Freud has told us that what began in relation to the father is completed in relation to the group, and to the extent that the primal parricide is psychologically real, the lure of the Witiko for our psyche is simply our search for our lost, primal selves lurking just out of sight of society and waiting for an unguarded moment when they may snatch a recapitulation of the Oedipal fetê. We imagine the Witiko, lost in space and time, in the boreal wilderness, waiting to grab the next hapless Algonkian that he can get his brutish hands on. Where has the Witiko come from? Why, he was from humans to begin with, but became separated, and liminal, and then . . . Ooops! Witiko has inverted the [Victor] Turner-Gennep sequence and is reincorporating human society, victim by victim.
>
> Freud's ghost should be smiling at the scene, to see old repressive society being eaten by the young-primeval natural man; Oedipus wins again. But the Indians lose again. The plot is absurd, if rationally plausible, and leaves us where this paper began, wondering why we write so much and make such a mess, on a topic about which we know so little.

Preston (1980:127-128) concludes his argument with a quote from Evans-Pritchard, that reads in part: "If the specificity of a fact is

lost, the generalization about it becomes so general as to be valueless" (1962:175). This is a basic principle of science and a piece of plain common sense that is all too often overlooked in anthropology. I am in emphatic agreement with Preston that this truism has been for the most part ignored by analysts of the windigo phenomenon.

Preston's paper has many strengths, but its weakness lies in the fact that he is unable to explain why the Algonkian "ecology of mind" (1980:117; italics Preston's)—poorly understood as it may be—should have evolved the belief in a cannibal spirit-monster capable of taking possession of ordinary humans, thereby necessitating the execution of those so "possessed." In his critique of Charles Bishop's (1973) observation that reports of windigo cannibalism are positively correlated with starvation and ecological degradation on the Canadian Shield in the 1800s, Preston astutely points out that "we are not here faced with a simple task of filling empty stomachs, but rather with the elaboration of an implicitly symbolic system of belief" (1980:116-117). Preston is quite correct in contending that starvation and other infrastructural crises cannot account for the existence of windigo cannibalism as distinguished from "lifeboat" cannibalism, but this is not the problem that confronts us. Preston himself believes the evidence for psychotic windigo cannibalism to be insufficient (1980:128). His belief is confirmed by my investigations into archival sources which indicate that windigo cannibalism probably never occurred in an etic/behavioral sense. The task remaining before us then is to answer the question, why are the windigo accusations and executions positively correlated with starvation, ecological degradation, and other crises

in the material sphere? How, in other words, can we account for the elaboration of Preston's implicitly symbolic system of belief?

This is a task that lends itself very well to the research strategy of cultural materialism, which grants as a matter of theoretical principle research priority to the study of infrastructural variables as determinative (Harris 1979:46-76). Honigmann's comparison of windigo executions to Euro-American witch hunting was a shrewd one (1967:401). Marvin Harris has been foremost among those who have shown that fluctuations in the frequency and severity of witchcraft accusations are not capricious, but are the results of practical and mundane causes (1974:207-266; 1980:404-405). Preston's inability to deal with the issue of the evolution of the windigo belief complex illustrates the limitations of phenomenology and other ideographic strategies.

Ridington's paper (1976:126) has given us important clues toward an understanding of why Northern Algonkian religion might have diverged in important ways from the symbolic belief systems of their Subarctic neighbors. My own ethnohistorical inquiries are congruent with Bishop's (1974, 1976), and the following chapter will show how the specific culture history of the Northern Algonkian peoples since the 1500s is compatible with the evolution of the windigo belief system.

In a recent issue of the popular journal Science Digest, Charles Lindholm, who "has a Ph.D. in anthropology" and who "taught at Barnard College," collaborated with Cherry Lindholm, who "has an M.A. in psychology," to write an article entitled "World's Strangest Mental Illnesses" (1981:42-53). Windigo leads off the paper accompanied by a

lurid illustration. The Lindholms invent a fictional Indian named Red Bear who

> sits up wild-eyed, his body drenched in sweat, every muscle tensed. . . . He has dreamed of the windigo—the monster with a heart of ice—and the dream sealed his doom. Coldness gripped his own heart. The ice monster had entered his body and possessed him. He himself had become a windigo, and he could do nothing to avert his fate.
>
> Suddenly, the form of Red Bear's sleeping wife begins to change. He no longer sees a women, but a deer. His eyes flame. Silently he draws his knife from under the blanket and moves stealthily toward the motionless figure. Saliva drips from the corners of his mouth, and a terrible hunger twists his intestines. A powerful desire to eat raw flesh consumes him. (1981: 52)

How much longer will anthropology lend itself to this kind of vilification? In a review article on the subject of psychiatric anthropology, John G. Kennedy concludes his summary of the windigo question with these thoughts (1973:1158-1159):

> What is so exasperating about the windigo literature, as about all the discussions of the "exotic disorders," is the vast amount of interesting speculation on the basis of such a slender evidence. Since Fogelson [1965], Linton [1956:64-67], Parker [1960], Roehrl [sic; 1970, 1972], Teicher [1960], Wallace [1961: 175], and Yap [1951, 1969] have never reported observing an actual case of windigo, and have made their diagnoses, classifications, and analyses from fragmentary accounts, most of the discussion amounts only to speculative hypotheses that may now be untestable.

I hold Kennedy to be right on the first count, but wrong on the second. Relatively hard data are recoverable from archival sources. These data in combination with a thorough ethnographic grounding and cross-cultural evolutionary perspective yield a uniformitarian solution to the windigo puzzle of high plausibility and likelihood; a solution that confirms the suspicions expressed by John Honigmann in 1967.

Notes

[1]For reasons of space I make almost no mention of the scores of passive references to "windigo psychosis" by authors who claim no special competence on the subject, and whose comments are obviously based on the work of others.

[2]Translated from the French by Kimberly Head.

[3]Wing (1978:98-139 passim) confines his discussion to the diagnosis of schizophrenia.

[4]The senior author of this paper gives as his address the Department of Psychiatry, University of Wisconsin Medical School, Madison, Wisconsin. It should be noted in passing that in that part of the United States a car trunk serves as a good deep freezer for many months of the year, and that it is used as such by many completely normal and rational people.

[5]In a later paper McGee states that "the reason fat was used a[s] a cure for the windigo psychosis is that it is the most human of foods [in a structural sense], and not because it contains vitamin B_{12}. The motivation was to rehumanize the psychotic—not "cure" him. Anyone who rejected fat had surely ceased to be human and should be destroyed; as long as fat was taken, there was hope for transformation" (1975:124).

[6]I do not deny the fact that Northern Algonkians are likely to attribute the development of a food crisis to the sorcery of an enemy, but they are also quite capable of recognizing the urgency of metabolic necessity.

[7]The fact that the Jesuits' Indian deputies were accused of having been overcome by cannibal-madness by the Lake St. John Indians could be taken as evidence for the belief in windigo insanity among the mid-17th-century Algonkians even if the accusation was false and the deputies were murdered for purely mundane reasons. This militates against my argument that the belief is a relatively recent one. I believe, however, that since boreal forest subsistence is etically precarious—particularly after the fur-trade period, which began very early in Quebec—the taboo against cannibalism was elaborated at an early juncture and antedates the belief in windigo possession. Therefore it would not be surprising to find those seeking to justify murder doing so by accusing their victims of having been on the verge of violating the strongest taboo.

[8]The prototype for the Australian form appears to be the Aranda (Turner 1978:196).

CHAPTER III
WINDIGO'S ECOLOGICAL AND ETHNOHISTORICAL SETTING

The purpose of this chapter is to show how the culture history of the Northern Algonkian peoples—particularly the Northern Ojibwa—led to the belief in cannibal-monsters, the institutionalization of triage homicide, and the development of a witch-fear complex in which the weak and the marginal were the most likely candidates for execution. What I will endeavor to persuade the reader is that the weight of evidence indicates that "windigo" was the specific response of the Northern Algonkian peoples to a specific set of demo-techno-econo-environmental determinants, and that this response shows general similarities to the responses of other peoples exposed to similar infrastructural conditions. First I will critically review the culture histories of the north-central Algonkians among whom the windigo complex seems first to have developed. I will make the case that the windigo belief system initially arose among those Cree who were impelled by the fur trade to eke out a precarious year-round existence in the Hudson Bay Lowland. Later the complex was to diffuse to an expanding Ojibwa population attracted to the boreal forest between about 1680-1780 by the development of the fur trade. The Northern Ojibwa will be singled out as a special example to be examined in detail. It will be shown that by the 1820s the boreal forest Algonkians found themselves in dire straits and responded to this situation by a shift in their mode of production and reproduction. But

with environmental degradation and the elimination of competition from the fur trade after 1821, migration was no longer a feasible solution to their problems. In fact, once in place, the monopolistic Hudson's Bay Company did what it could to prevent emigration and readjustment, reluctant as it was to lose its pool of cheap native labor.

On this point the testimony of missionary sources becomes important, especially that of the Rev. Frederick George Stevens (1869-1946), a man of courage, dedication, pugnacity, and above all moral integrity, who did not shrink from conflict with the Hudson's Bay Company, the Dominion Government, or his own superiors in the Methodist Church. The data provided by Stevens show that the situation in which the boreal forest Algonkians found themselves late in the 19th and early in the 20th centuries was one of incredible hardship.

Yet the Hudson's Bay Company, with the active complicity of at least some missionary leaders and government officials, perpetuated this situation. The foregoing sounds deceptively simple, but it is far from trivial. The prevailing misconception about native North Americans is that they always and everywhere were "at one with nature," "in harmony with their environment," and that it was only in reservation times (usually associated with the extermination of the buffalo) that Indians were subject to starvation due to the misdeeds of corrupt agents. This myth of pre-conquest homeostasis is believed in and promulgated by many educated Indians today, and in fact the more acculturated the Indian, the more likely it is that s(he) will believe it. This chapter documents the fact that the period from about 1820 to 1920 was a period of ecological, economic, epidemiological, demographic, and nutritional

catastrophe for the Northern Algonkians; that windigo witch-fear was a social manifestation of this series of calamities; and that far from being fully satisfied with the Subarctic environment, the Indians sought to escape it whenever good opportunities arose to do so (cf. Preston 1975).

Among Amerindian language families the "Algonquian stock is the largest, comprising about thirty-four living and extinct languages, and geographically the most widely distributed in North America, extending from Labrador to California and from Hudson Bay to Georgia, except for some interrupting enclaves of other stocks" (Siebert 1967:13). In his landmark work "The Original Home of the Proto-Algonquian People," Frank T. Siebert, Jr. (1967) used bird, mammal, fish, and tree names reconstructed from the Proto-Algonkian language to determine the Urheimat of this group as it existed some 3,000 years ago. Making an intersection of the original ranges of the considered species (those having cognates in the eastern and central Algonkian languages), Siebert was able to determine that, as of about 1,200 B.C., "the original home of the Algonquian peoples lay in the region between Lake Huron and Georgian Bay [on the west] and the middle course of the Ottawa River [on the east], bounded on the north by Lake Nipissing and the Mattawa River and on the south by the northern shore of Lake Ontario, the headwaters of the Grand River, and the Saugeen River" (1967:40).

If Siebert is correct, and assuming that the members of this speech community were also members of the same sociocultural community, we can see immediately that even three millenia ago the ancestors of historic Algonkian populations were exploiting more than one ecological

and climatic environment. The southern and southwestern part of Siebert's Proto-Algonkian homeland is today a corn and fruit belt. Deciduous forests predominated in pre-European times, interspersed with stands of pine and hemlock. But the bulk of the Urheimat is on the Laurentian Uplands including what is today Algonquin Provincial Park and the Madawaska Highlands. This is a mixed forest region, but with conifers predominating, characterized by high seasonal temperature variation, and is quite distinct from the much smaller Ontario Lowland zone to the south (Kroeber 1939:91-92, 96-98, 193-195). Were the varied resources of the Urheimat exploited seasonally, or were there Algonkian populations with distinct ecological adaptations even in 1,200 B.C.? So far there is insufficient archaeological evidence to answer this question.

By the time of European contact, much of the Ontario Lowland region came to be occupied by the Huron and other Iroqoian-speaking agriculturalists. At this juncture, Algonkian-speaking groups had expanded far and wide. But the Ojibwa—the northern populations of which are the focus of this study—may not have moved much in 2,800 years. According to ethnohistorian Charles Bishop, Ojibwa home area at contact was just west of and almost contiguous with Siebert's Proto-Algonkian homeland. Bishop believes that 350 years ago "there were no groups . . . which could properly be called 'Northern' Ojibwa, since aboriginal groups were confined to the area near the north shore of Lake Huron and the east end of Lake Superior" (1976:39).

Although there are those who disagree with Bishop's position, it is an intriguing one and merits detailed exposition. His studies have

convinced him that when the French first contacted the Ojibwa during the 1620s they were confined to about 20 villages,

> each numbering from about 100 to 300 persons, giving an overall population of perhaps 5,000 persons (1976:39). . . . During the historic period, the Ojibwa were dispersed over an area at least ten times as large as their ancestors had occupied at contact, including the northern part of the border states southwest of Lake Superior and portions of the northeastern Plains as well as most of northern Ontario and eastern Manitoba. Numerically the population grew from about 5,000 persons to nearly 60,000 persons, who are at present living in two countries (1976:40).

Bishop points out that "the proto-historic Ojibwa did not live in isolation within a Subarctic ecozone but rather were marginal to it" (1976:39) and that "the early literature . . . indicates that there was a comparatively rich variety of foods available, including fish, deer, moose, and beaver" (1976:39). We may also assume that maple and birch sugar provided a storable year-round carbohydrate complement to the foods of animal origin. The best wild rice beds lay just to the west of this territory, but this nourishing grain may also have been available at times. "These relatively reliable and stable resources," writes Bishop, "permitted an elaborate and varied ceremonial and social life" (1976: 39).

New post-contact conditions induced the Ojibwa and other tribes "to congregate near Sault Ste. Marie during the summer months to engage in intertribal trade . . ." (Bishop 1976:43). From 1640 to 1680 Bishop believes that there was a florescence of Central Great Lakes Algonkian culture brought about by these summer congregations, and keynoted by an elaboration of the Feast of the Dead (possibly borrowed from a Huron prototype) (Bishop 1976:40, 43). The early part of this period coincides with the disintegration of the important Huron-French fur trade network

and the destruction of Huronia by smallpox and Iroquois raids. In the late 1650s "the Ottawa and various Ojibwa groups began to assume the role of middlemen" in the French St. Lawrence-Great Lakes fur trade previously dominated by the Huron (Heidenreich and Ray 1976:31).

As we have seen in the previous chapter, Bishop's research yields an unequivocal finding on the issue of the existence of cannibal-monsters in the religion of the 17th-century Ojibwa: "Nowhere in the early Jesuit accounts relating to the Ojibwa and Ottawa is there a specific devil form recognizable as the Windigo, a rather remarkable fact considering the apparent preoccupation in the nineteenth century with the phenomenon" (1975:244). Bishop did find evidence for the existence of female cannibal-beings in Montagnais mythology, but these ogresses were not associated in any way with deviant desires among humans (1975:241-242, 244). The Jesuits, of course, were quite pains-taking in their observations of native religious beliefs and practices.

It is beyond my competence to provide culture histories of all Northern Algonkian groups. The windigo cannibal-complex has been most closely associated with the Ojibwa and the Cree (including the Montagnais-Naskapi). J. G. E. Smith's discovery of an entry into the York Fort post journal by Captain James Knight in 1741 (HBC-A B. 239/a/1 cited by Smith 1976:21) is probably the earliest known reference to the creature by name, suggesting the possibility of a coastal Cree origin which may have diffused to the Ojibwa (cf. Bishop 1975:243).

There are at least three ecological zones in which windigo belief is associated with the idea of cannibalism: the Hudson Bay Lowland, boreal forest, and to a lesser extent the mixed deciduous forests south

and southwest of the Subarctic zones. Among Cree and Ojibwa outside these zones windigo belief takes an entirely different form, indicating that ethnic considerations are less important than environmental ones in understanding windigo witch-fear, and suggesting that comparative culture history may be more important still.

J. Anthony Paredes was the first to point out that "the horrible cannibal monster is terminologically identified with the ludicrous clown-shamans of the Plains Ojibwa and Plains Cree" (1972:113). Paredes' sources are Skinner (1914:500-505, 528-529) and Mandelbaum (1940:274-275). From these works we can see that the Plains Ojibwa and Plains Cree transmuted the windigo figure into a harmless, even beneficent personage. The evidence that the change was in this direction and not the reverse comes from linguistics. The Plains figure is called "Windigokan." The suffix /- kan/ in the Ojibwa and Cree languages carries the meaning "fabrication" or "surrogate." Skinner called the Windigokanuk "cannibal dancers" (1914:500), but the social function of those Plains Ojibwa whose dreams entitled them to act as Windigokan was that of healers of the sick and exorcisers of demons (1914:501). They also used inverted speech like the "Contraries" celebrated in other Plains tribes, and like the Contraries were known for their antic military exploits (1914:501-502). The Ojibwa and Cree were latecomers to the Plains. Referring to the Plains Cree, Mandelbaum writes that the Wehtikokan dance

> was a masked performance often given during the Sun dance period. The wehtiko was a cannibalistic character in the folklore of the Wood Cree. Tales concerning this spirit power were sometimes told among the Plains Cree, but the spirit was never seen in the prairie country and imbued only the forest inhabitants with man-eating desires. Except for the name, this character does not figure in the dance. (1940:274)

Plains Cree and Plains Ojibwa society passed through many crises, but they were not bound to the trading posts and they were not faced by the specter of starvation as long as bison were abundant. It is my opinion that these factors were incongruent with the development of windigo witch-fear on the Plains (and indeed witchcraft and witch-fear were minimal among them), hence the benign and comical windigokan of the buffalo range.

While the cannibal witch-fear complex may have had antecedents among the Montagnais of Quebec (Teicher 1960:76-77, 107), a group whose "subsistence base . . . had been drastically disrupted by trade and environmental depletion" since the 1530s (Bishop 1975:239-240), it seems first to have crystallized around the Windigo giant among the Cree of the Hudson Bay Lowland (see Figure 1). This stark area according to archaeologist Kenneth Dawson "appear[s] to have been virtually unoccupied in prehistoric times" (1981:13). It is Bishop's (1975:242-243) belief that

> the Cree who became attached to the coastal Hudson's Bay Company posts during the late seventeenth century exhibited a relatively poor ecological adjustment from the beginning. There large trading posts such as Fort Albany, York Fort and Moose Factory represented points of convergence for large numbers of Indians. Thus, game which was hunted for both traders and Indians alike, dwindled rapidly near these centers within a few years after their establishment. The relative poverty of the coastal area except for the goose-hunting seasons, and the dependence of the Cree on trade goods and store foods in winter kept many Indians in an area where food was scarce and which may have been adandoned in the winter in aboriginal times. Starving Indians who resorted to the post in winter had to be maintained in oatmeal, peas, or surplus geese and fish. For example, according to Anthony Beale in March 1706, many Indians "are all so hungry that they are ready to Eate one another, so that now heare are 20 that wholely lies on the Factory" (Hudson's Bay Company Archives, B 3/a/1). Cases of death by starvation are also fairly numerous. In 1707, Beale wrote that "3 or four familys of Indians . . . has perrished this Winter by Reason there was but Fuew Beasts." (B 3/a/2)

Figure 1. Map of Northwestern Ontario and Manitoba.

On this point anthropologist Marshall G. Hurlich appears to concur. "Indians were forced to adjust to the rigors of the coastal winter . . . as much to the fur trader's manipulations as to the Indian's desire for European trade goods. Many perished from starvation as a result" (Hurlich 1981:8). Hurlich cites a statement by Douglas and Wallace (1926:40) based on Jeremie's account of his twenty years' experience at York Factory during the French occupation of 1694-1714. "When at the point of starvation," wrote Douglas and Wallace, "the father and mother kill their children and eat them, and then the stronger of the two eats the other" (1926:40, cited in Hurlich 1981:8).

Edward S. Rogers, an Algonkianist and ecologist with much experience in the Subarctic, believes that reports of starvation have been exaggerated, and that the Indians often claimed to be "starving" in order to manipulate the traders into providing handouts for them (personal communication). Nevertheless Roger's extensive and meticulous ethnohistorical research has uncovered instances of starvation and cannibalism both on the Hudson Bay Lowlands and the interior forests in the 18th century (1981:29). "At Fort Albany during the winter of 1764-5, six children are reported to have been killed and eaten [HBC-A B. 3/a/57: fo. 19] and in 1785-86 it was reported at Gloucester House that one family of Northward Indians had been driven to eat two of their children [HBC-A B. 78/a/13: fo. 17]. Rogers cites several other famine accounts (1981:28-30), and notes that "cases of hunger are often mentioned by the traders and even the occasional death by starvation" (1981:28). Still he believes that death by starvation occurred "rather infrequently considering the harsh conditions under which the Northern Ojibwa lived" (1981:29).

Yet Rogers' own research, as well as that of Bishop and Hurlich, indicates to me that the food crisis among the Northern Algonkians was serious, and that it was felt most keenly first among the Cree in the Hudson Bay Lowlands shortly after the establishment of the HBC coastal forts in the years following 1670. Later, hunger was to come to the boreal forest Ojibwa, reaching famine proportions in the third decade of the 19th century (Bishop 1974, 1976, 1978). I contend that the windigo complex followed in the tracks of starvation.

The reconstruction of Cree culture history is difficult. Although it appears that they occupied the Hudson Bay Lowland only seasonally—if at all—under aboriginal conditions, there is general agreement that the Cree inhabited the boreal forest in pre-contact times, and that they are represented there archaeologically by the Selkirk tool and pottery tradition (Dawson 1981:31). The exact nature of their ecological adaptation is unknown, but a high degree of mobility and seasonal exploitation of resources is assumed. Mandelbaum cites early sources that put the Cree at contact all the way from the shores of Hudson Bay to the wild rice beds near Lake of the Woods and on to the northwest shore of Lake Superior (1940:159-172). This is a huge range for one group to exploit seasonally, and we do not know how many local-group micro-adaptations might have been present.

But what of the Ojibwa? Here the experts disagree. As we have seen above, Bishop maintains that the proto-historic Ojibwa lived in a relatively small mixed-forest belt along the northeast shore of Lake Superior and the north shore of Lake Huron, and that it was not until the 1680s that a major separation of the Ojibwa began (1976:43).

Bishop believes that the Ojibwa were drawn north by trade conditions resulting from the establishment of the Hudson's Bay Company in 1670. This broke the Ojibwa middleman monopoly in the St. Lawrence-Great Lakes fur trade system operating from Quebec. As a result of the English competition from the Bay, the French established posts north of Lake Superior drawing with them Ojibwa who sought to preserve their middleman monopoly by intercepting the boreal forest Indians and preventing them by intimidation from trading their furs at the HBC posts on James Bay (Bishop 1976:44). "About this time, the Cree who had occupied the Shield country north of Lake Superior began gradually to shift to the west, while in their place came roving bands of Ojibwa and other Algonkian-speakers from the southeast" (Bishop 1976:44). If Bishop is correct in this—and a westward völkerwanderung of the Cree is generally accepted (e.g. Mandelbaum [1940:165-187; Ray 1974:98-102])—then it seems reasonable to assume that the Cree migration was made possible by the acquisition of firearms from the English, and motivated in part by the Cree desire to promote their middleman position in the English trade system (Heidenreich and Ray 1976:39).

In a paper co-authored with his wife, anthropologist M. Estellie Smith, Bishop states that "there is absolutely no historic evidence prior to the 1700s that the Ojibwa resided west of Lake Superior. . . . Cree groups inhabited the remaining portion of northern Ontario and down into southeastern Manitoba at contact" (1975:61). Bishop and Smith support their position by means of historical evidence summarized on pp. 56-58 of their paper, and go on to challenge the widely held archaeological belief that the Blackduck pottery tradition represents

Proto-Ojibwa populations (1975:58-61). The Blackduck tradition, which "has its core south of the height of land in the transitional Lake forest in Ontario [and] . . . also occur[s] throughout the Boreal Forest in Ontario" (Dawson 1981:31) is attributed by Bishop and Smith to the Proto-Assiniboin (1975:58-61). Archaeologists whose work is cited by Bishop and Smith in support of their position are Wilford (1945, 1955), Vickers (1948a,b), MacNeish (1958), and Hlady (1964, 1970). Archaeologists whose work is cited in opposition to the Blackduck Assiniboin hypothesis are Wright (1963, 1965, 1968a,b) and Evans (1961) (Bishop and Smith 1975:55). Since the publication of the Bishop-Smith paper, Syms (1977) has attributed Blackduck to the Northern Ojibwa, as has Dawson in a paper in press (1981:31-33).

All of this becomes important in the reconstruction of Ojibwa culture history. Were the Ojibwa indigenous to the boreal forest or were they not? Was windigo witch-fear absent from Ojibwa life in the 17th century as Bishop indicates (1975:244), or were there Northern Ojibwa groups on the Shield of whom the Jesuits were ignorant? Is it true, as Bishop states, that there were no "Northern Ojibwa" until after 1680? (1976:43).

The principal opposition to Bishop's position comes from Edward S. Rogers, Curator of Ethnology at the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto. Rogers does not see sharp ethnic discontinuities among the Northern Algonkian peoples, but believes that groups grade into one another. Correspondingly he believes that northern variants of Ojibwa populations have lived in the Shield Subarctic since ancient times, where they have been intermediate manifestations on the sociocultural

continuum between groups called "Cree" and those called "Ojibwa" (personal communication and following references). Rogers has in the past termed these populations "Cree-Ojibwa" (1963, 1965, 1966, 1969), but seems to have abandoned the neologism in recent years (Rogers and Black 1976; Rogers and Rogers 1978; Rogers 1981).

Bishop (1974:340-344, 1976:45), building on the work of Hickerson (1970:42-50), holds that Northern Ojibwa groups that have been known by animal names are the remnants of patrilineages or clan segments that broke away from the Ojibwa proper after 1680 and moved north to exploit the Shield Subarctic. Rogers, on the other hand, takes the absence of clan organization among the speakers of the Severn Dialect of Ojibwa as evidence for a sociocultural continuity between these people and their Cree neighbors, who also lack clans or totemic affiliations. Rogers believes that a more likely explanation for Northern Ojibwa group zoonyms is that they were designations applied to the followers of powerful Indian leaders. Hence the Crane Indians are not for Rogers a northern offshoot of the Crane clan of the Ojibwa proper. (The Cranes are the first of 21 clans listed by Ojibwa author William W. Warren, writing ca. 1852 [1957:44-45].) Rogers believes that the name may have originally meant no more than the followers of Ojičak or "the Crane," a northern leader who died around 1805. Later the name came to be generalized to all of Ojičak's descendents (Rogers 1981:3).

Bishop's work emphasizes process, change, movement, the clash of conflicting interests, and is characterized by venturesome attempts at generalization. His time in the field is limited, and he works almost exclusively from documentary sources. Rogers too calls attention to the

importance of historical and environmental transitions, but he stresses sociocultural continuities in time and in space, and the over-arching importance of ethnographic fieldwork. Rogers' writings are characterized by a cautious particularism that is wary of conjectural generalization. For example, after presenting several documentary accounts supporting Bishop's theory of the recency of Northern Ojibwa habitation of the boreal forest, Rogers concludes: "The evidence for a southern origin of the Northern Ojibwa is open to close scrutiny and certainly an alternative interpretation of the facts is possible. The occupation of northern Ontario by Ojibwa may have taken place considerably earlier than the first half of the 18th century" (1981:7).

Both Rogers and Bishop have devoted their professional lives to the study of the Northern Ojibwa, the group with which I have been intimately connected and the group around which I will build a demo-techno-environmental explanation for the windigo phenomenon. But windigo witch-fear also occurred in other Northern Algonkian groups. How can we be sure that the Northern Ojibwa provide a normative example of windigo? Conclusive proof for the representativeness of the Northern Ojibwa on this issue is lacking, but strong inference is present. The Ojibwa of northwestern Ontario and northeastern Manitoba are geographically central to the windigo phenomenon. My working assumption is that there is more to be gained from an in-depth knowledge of the phenomenon in one area than there is from a cursory survey of decontextualized and unverified anecdotes from the entire range. (Archival material presented in Chapter IV is from the western Woods Cree as well as from the Northern Ojibwa.)

Bishop and Rogers disagree on many points, but one thing they agree on is, in Roger's words (1981:47), the fact that

> for the Northern Ojibwa, the year 1821 marked the end of an era. . . . In that year the Hudson's Bay Company and the North West Company amalgamated. . . . No longer could the Indians play one trader off against another as they had done in the past. Furthermore, the Subarctic, always a harsh environment, had become even more so during the past few decades by the over-exploitation of the country that had been encouraged by the competition between the Hudson's Bay Company and the North West Company. Fur-bearing animals and big game had become greatly reduced in numbers. Accordingly the Northern Ojibwa, due to the changing circumstances, slowly settled into an altered way of life.

The "altered way of life" of which Rogers speaks is nothing less than a shift to different modes of production and reproduction. Rogers was in the vanguard of those who have identified this shift from big game hunting to a reliance on fish and hare (1966). (Moose were virtually exterminated from the boreal forests of northwestern Ontario early in the 19th century, not to reappear in any numbers for three generations. The woodland caribou population was severely reduced.) But Rogers rejects the notion of a new mode of reproduction. The issue is an important one and will be examined in some detail.

My thesis is that windigo witch-fear is the consequence of a series of crises in Northern Algonkian life. Some that have already been mentioned are disruptions and dispersions caused by the fur trade, food shortages caused by faunal depletions, and entrapment in a monopolistic trade situation with an increased dependence on the HBC posts. Not to be overlooked is the scourge of European diseases: smallpox, measles, tuberculosis, pneumonia, influenza, and respiratory illnesses of all sorts. A counterintuitive corollary was a dramatic increase in population.

One of the most important data sets in this study is the Fiddler case, which involved four windigo executions among the Sandy Lake-Deer Lake Indians (see Chapter IV). My archival research yielded an HBC report for the years 1822-23 giving the totals of 124 Indians affiliated with the Island Lake post, 106 trading at Sandy Lake, and 81 at Merry's House, for a grand total of 311 (HBC-A, B. 93/z/1 folios 1 and 2). A prose report of the Island Lake District for the year 1824 indicates that 211 Indians traded at the Island Lake post that year, and 77 had been attached to Merry's House.

> The Post of Sandy Lake was abandoned in Autumn - '23 in consequence of the means of subsistence being too difficult to [illegible] and the Indians, consisting of 22 Families, resorted 14 to Island Lake and the remainder to Trout Lake, Severn district. Merry's Hours was likewise abandoned in May - '24, The returns of that Post not being sufficient to pay the expense of either a Boat or Canoe it was judged more advantageous to divide the Indians between Island Lake, York Factory, and Trout Lake, as their hunting grounds lay nearly in the centre—between these Establishments. (HBC-A B. /93/e/3)

So, having received an influx of immigrants from Sandy Lake and Merry's House, the population at Island Lake stood at 211 in 1824. (An 1838 census numbered them at 353 [HBC-A B. 239/z/10].) By 1924 the Island Lake population had jumped to 625. On what was to become the Ontario side, the increase was no less dramatic. The population stood at 106 in 1823 and presumably many, but not all, of these people emigrated closer to Island Lake on the west or Big Trout Lake on the east when the post at Sandy Lake closed in 1823. But by 1924 there were 255 people on the government rolls from the encampments at Sandy Lake, Deer Lake, and North Spirit Lake (Canada 1924). In other words, the total population of the district jumped from 311 in 1823 to 880 in 1924 during what was certainly a century of privation.

At first, I was surprised by these findings. On the one hand the statistics bespoke a situation even more grave than I envisioned. Ecological catastrophy, economic bondage, and devastation by alien diseases are bad enough. It seemed to me that a skyrocketing population in the face of all these misfortunes would serve to aggravate them and put tremendous strain on the social fabric. But how could it be that there would be a demographic increase rather than depopulation under such conditions? In checking my findings against those of the two Northern Ojibwa specialists I have again found an interesting dichotomy. Bishop's work, as it turned out, is completely in keeping with my own (1978:225):

> One biological consequence of the shift from large game hunting to the intensification of efforts on small nonmigratory fauna [after 1821] was an evident population growth during the nineteenth century. In the face of recurring episodes of extreme deprivation, this, at first, would seem to be contradictory. Nevertheless, demographic materials from all trading post records throughout the Ojibwa area attest to it.

Bishop goes on to give examples from Lac Seul and Osnaburgh House (1978: 225).

Rogers, however, takes the opposite position. He believes the Ojibwa population was fairly constant, and that disease cycles caused fairly uniform fluctuations in population on the order of plus or minus 30% of the median. He believes that my early 19th century figures from the records pertaining to Island Lake and Sandy Lake are artificially low (personal communication). In a paper in press, Rogers offers these HBC-A quotes in support of his position (1981:4. Emphasis in the original; parenthetical question marks presumably Rogers').

> The Cranes are said to be increasing. Any computation regarding their number is difficult owing to the fact that when they visit

> the Post leave their families behind them and further having (?) superstitious ideas regarding the number of their people-are very reticent and (would misunderstand any inquiries?). The number of Indian hunters on the Company's books including Crin (Cree?) and Cranes amount to 152. (HBC-A B. 220/z/2)

"Previously when a census was taken," writes Rogers (1981:4), "there had been trouble. On July 1, 1882, Fortesque, in charge at York Factory, wrote his subordinate in charge at Trout Lake as follows:"

> In taking your Indian census, which I wish you had estimated, do it quietly without attracting notice as last time the Indians got an absurd idea into their heads and there was trouble all over the District. (HBC-A B. 220/b/2: fo. 17d)

Rogers' admonitions must be taken seriously, but I believe that my statistical findings are genuine, and see no reason to question Bishop's. What can then explain the population take-off? My first inclination was to look for a bio-physiological solution to the puzzle. A theory that exposure to new European foods, such as flour and oatmeal, may have had an effect on ovulatory cycles or weaning practices proved unrewarding (Marano 1979; cf. Frisch and McArthur 1974; Van Ginneken 1974). On the other hand, the "paradoxical" population increase of the 19th-century Ojibwa is far from unprecedented. As Harris (personal communication 1979) pointed out, following Ben White (1973, 1975), Mamdani (1973), and Nag, White, and Peet (1978), "the cost/benefits of child-rearing can be used to explain [the] paradox of rising population in development contexts where standard of living, health, and life expectancy are deteriorating." Harris went on to ask if there had been a shift in the role of child labor among the Northern Ojibwa in the changed conditions of the 19th century.

There was in fact a change in the value of child labor which accompanied the Northern Ojibwa shift from a big-game hunting mode of

production to one based on diversified small game, especially fish and hare. An economy based on big game hunting is dependent on the labor inputs of adult and adolescent males. In an economy based on the extraction of fish, hare, small game, and the trapping of furbearers, children of both sexes become net producers of food (and sometimes furs) at an early age. In this respect the value of Northern Ojibwa child labor parallels the patterns found in rural India (Mamdani 1973), colonial Java (White 1973), and contemporary Java and Nepal (White 1975; Nag, White, and Peet 1978). In all of these cases high population growth was found to be a consequence of the fact that parents could enjoy a higher standard of living by having more, rather than fewer children. This is true despite the long-run environmental, social, and demographic penalities involved in such a pattern. When confronted by the "bio-psychological constants" (Harris 1979:62-64) of human existence, people rarely choose options on the basis of what will be good for future generations. People usually choose options with the hope that benefits will be reaped in their own lifetimes.

In the case of the Northern Ojibwa it is easy to visualize how a change in their mode of production would be accompanied by a change in their mode of reproduction. Hunting moose or caribou, especially in deep snow, is an exhausting activity that has traditionally devolved to men (see Marano 1981). Whether or not it is an activity that could be just as well assigned to women is an interesting question beyond the scope of this dissertation, but it is an activity clearly beyond the physical capacities of children. On the other hand, children are just as adept at the capture of small game as are men. A young girl tending

a line of rabbit snares is likely to be just as productive as a man in his prime engaged in the same activity. And while male labor was doubtless very important in the construction of autumn fish weirs, once the wiers were built women and children could and did help harvest the catch (Rogers 1981:42). But it was after the lakes were frozen that the labor of children in fishing became especially important. A child can jig through the ice for fish as easily as a man, and at a lower nutritional cost. Children are also capable of becoming productive fur trappers at an earlier age than they can become proficient moose hunters.

Then, too, big game hunting is a more nomadic adaptation than the fish and fur, hare and grouse economy. Generally speaking nomadism causes children to be spaced farther apart, while a more sedentary existence relaxes the pressures for birth spacing. Bishop makes a related point (1978:226):

> Trapping and hare snaring . . . demanded less mobility and hence less territory than big game hunting. While livelihood on moose and caribou required that hunting groups move frequently and over extensive regions, the exploitation of small fauna meant that a greater number of smaller units could survive provided that they were scattered over the country. Thus, for example, a territory of 3,000 square miles might support a group of 30 persons, 10 of whom are, as big game hunters, the food getters. In contrast, that same 3,000 square miles would be capable of supporting, say, three extended family units of 15 persons each (about 45 people altogether) if subsistence is on small non-migratory fauna such as hare and fish.

As Ester Boserup (1965) has shown, modes of production normally shift after being intensified past the point of diminishing returns. In the Northern Ojibwa case the mode of production based on hunting large cervids was intensified with novel technology under fur-trade conditions not only past the point where people were working harder to get less in return, but almost past the carrying capacity of their

boreal environment. As Harris emphasizes, "we must distinguish between the effects of exceeding carrying capacity and the effect of exceeding the point of diminishing returns. When carrying capacity is exceeded, the total annual energy flow will begin to decline as a result of irreversible damage to the ecosystem" (1980:191; italics in the original). The damage to the northern environment may not have been irreversible, but it took the best part of a century for moose to recover to anything like their former numbers (Peterson 1955), and Rogers believes that the caribou have never returned to their pre-depletion levels (1981:60). It seems likely that the Northern Ojibwa and related Algonkian groups must have felt the pinch of diminishing returns from the progressive intensification of the big-game hunting mode of production long before the crisis of the 1820s.

Bishop reaches similar conclusions, which he illustrates from his rich fund of archival material (1978:225).

> It is an accepted principle that "equilibrium systems regulate population density below the carrying capacity of the environment" (Binford 1968:328). Equilibrium, it should be stressed, does not refer to a constancy in the numbers of persons, but rather to a balanced relationship between the population and its basic resources. Population growth can be caused by a number of factors. In the case of the Northern Ojibwa, demographic changes seem to have been primarily due to an increase in labor input and to social reorganization for subsistence ends. . . . With respect to the labor input, there can be no question that more effort had to be put into survival activities as large game diminished in numbers and eventually disappeared. Traders like McKenzie were aware of the marked contrast with earlier conditions: "The Indian life is become a most miserable life. . . . the procuring of the means of existence keeps the very best Indian in constant employment every day of the year & not to live as Indians were want [sic] to live 20 years ago but merely to exist" (McKenzie 1831; HBC-A B. 107/e/4). Every capable Indian regardless of age and sex was now employed in the food quest rather than merely the adult hunters and the women who set nets and snares prior to the disaster. The labor input was thus considerably higher in relation to the productive results.

Some qualifying comments must be added to Bishop's statements. Firstly, large game never completely disappeared; a few caribou remained. Secondly, there is some question about whether fish nets were ever in general use until recent times (Rogers 1981:43). A third quibble: Bishop is never explicit on the subject of Northern Ojibwa rationality. He states that the population rose in response to a demand for increased labor inputs into the new economy, but he does not specify what alternatives would be selectively rewarded or penalized under conditions of the new mode of production. In my opinion, members of larger families were rewarded with a higher and less precarious standard of living than members of smaller families. The mechanism for the population increase probably was, as Harris suggests, a relaxed selection on traditional methods of population control such as infanticide and neglect (personal communication 1979).

But hair-splitting aside, Bishop's work is an important corpus of material that tends to corroborate my interpretation of the windigo witch-fear complex. For if it is true, as Bishop writes, that by the end of the 1820s it became necessary for "every capable Indian regardless of age and sex [to be] . . . employed in the food quest" (1978: 225), then a crucial corollary is that every incapable Indian imposed a severe tax on the domestic economy. This was true not only because these people could not work, but more importantly because providing protracted nursing care for them diverted precious manpower and womanpower away from subsistence activities from which it could not be spared. The maintenance of incapacitated individuals virtually eliminated group mobility, especially during open-water seasons (including

freeze-up and break-up) when one false move could spell disaster for all. An inability to move could precipitate a more gradual calamity, since some resources were exploited seasonally and mobility was necessary to exploit the environment in an optimal way (Winterhalder and Smith [eds.] 1981). For these reasons I hold the belief complex surrounding possession by the Windigo monster evolved to provide a structural and superstructural framework supporting a system of triage homicide.

But why windigo? Why specifically the cannibal motif? It is suggested that in a society living this close to the bone one would learn to fear both starvation and cannibalism. Under such conditions it is perceptible to all that the continued existence in the social group of the senile, the chronically ill, the mentally disturbed, and the delirious brings everyone several steps closer to the dreaded possibilities. It is rationally discerned that the lives of the impaired may cause deaths among the healthy. To make matters worse, the drain of energies and resources on the group imposed by the sick increases the threat of famine cannibalism among the healthy. A simple overlay of projection onto these realistic fears might result in a composite where the sick person's existence is seen as dangerous because he or she is perceived to be preoccupied by thoughts of cannibalism rather than the accuser. The danger, therefore, presented by the impaired person to the accuser is seen by the latter to be more immediate than that of the accuser's possible starvation. The accuser believes that the afflicted person will eat him (her). For this reason it is believed necessary that the "windigo victim" be destroyed. The

group feels somewhat more secure as a result of this execution, and this feeling is taken as confirmation of the correctness of the diagnosis.

But how can we be sure that conditions were bad enough to warrant this interpretation, and assuming conditions were that bad, why didn't the Indians get themselves out of it? If groups of Ojibwa marched onto the Shield Subarctic late in the 17th and early in the 18th centuries in search of a better life, why didn't they march out in the 19th century when the situation became almost untenable? If large numbers of Cree vacated the boreal forest in historic times to follow the fur trade onto the plains, why didn't they all leave? What kept so many of them in the muskeg country?

The answer is that when given half a chance, the Indians did try to leave the north and this tendency was actively opposed by the Hudson's Bay Company. The evidence for this statement comes from missionary sources, particularly the writings of Frederick George Stevens, and it is his story to which we now turn.

A revisionist tendency in Canadian historiography, exemplified by Adams (1975), holds that missionaries were the spiritual arm in a church-state-business alliance, the purpose of which was to exploit the labor and resources of Native Canadian peoples. I have found this approach to be inadequate. (In this I have been preceded by Czuboka [1960].) My research indicates that men of the cloth were often at odds with the mercantile-monopolist fur-traders over the Indian issue. As I will show below, some Hudson's Bay Company people clearly wanted to preserve the status quo by retaining the Indians as a source of

cheap labor in the fur trade. Many English-speaking missionaries, for their part, believed that they would never be of much lasting use to the Indians as long as the Indians continued to be semi-nomadic trappers, hunters, and gatherers.

In the 19th century many people felt that sedentarism was a necessary if not sufficient precondition for Christian living. The missionaries saw nomadism as a lifestyle congruent only with satanism and witchcraft. And from a temporal perspective too, the missionaries were well aware of the suffering and starvation that often went hand in hand with the quest for furs. They did not see Indian dependence on the trading post as a source of either spiritual or material good, and tended to see "Indian immorality" as a set of bad habits picked up from clerks and post managers (e.g. Garrett n.d.: 55-56, 65-67). As a specific for these maladies they dreamed of helping Native Canadians to develop into sturdy, independent yeoman farmers in the best British tradition. As early as 1822 John West, an Anglican priest who was official chaplain to the Hudson's Bay Company, wrote these words in his journal:

> It was now hinted to me, that interest I was taking in the education of the native children, had already excited the fears of some of the chief factors and traders, as to the extent to which it might be carried. Though a few conversed liberally with me on the subject, there were others who were apprehensive that the extension of knowledge among the natives, and locating them in agricultural pursuits where practicable, would operate as an injury to the fur trade. My reply on the contrary was, that if Christian knowledge were gradually diffused among the natives throughout the vast territory of the Hudson's Bay Company, from the shores of the Atlantic to those of the North Pacific, it would best promote the honour and advantages of all parties concerned in the fur trade, and which I was persuaded was the general enlightened opinion of the Directors in London. (West 1824:92)

These rank-and-file English-speaking Protestant missionaries of the 19th century were attempting to carry out a similar policy to that

which had been more or less successfully implemented by Catholic missionaries in previous centuries. The Jesuits had worked assiduously to sedentarize the Indians of New France in the 17th century (Bailey 1969: 88-90), and the work of the Franciscans in California is well known. Spanish priests in Paraguay also have worked to relocate nomadic Indians to protected agricultural enclaves (Hawkes and Hill n.d.: 5), where the indigenous peoples could be more effectively missionized, and where a constant supply of domestic foodstuffs is available.

But there was a critical difference between these sedentarization schemes and the ones proposed for the 19th century boreal forest Algonkians. The activities of the Jesuits had often been "at variance with the interests of the French fur-traders" (Bailey 1969:88), but there was more going on in New France than the fur trade, and countervailing powers in the colony allowed the Jesuits to proceed with their activities without serious impediment from other Frenchmen. But until well into the present century English Canadians took very little interest in what was going on among the Subarctic Algonkians apart from the fur trade, and for many years after 1821 the Canadian fur trade and the Hudson's Bay Company monopoly were virtually isomorphic.

Although the Hudson's Bay Company sold its vast holdings to the Dominion of Canada in 1869, its influence in Ottawa remained powerful for many decades. The company stood in clear opposition to Indian migration and relocation from ca. 1830 on. It was not in their interest to lose their source of cheap native labor, and they were successful in retaining it. High-ranking church leaders sometimes identified with the company and the Federal Government on this issue at the

expense of their own field missionaries. Foremost among those in the Methodist Church was the McDougall family, as well as Alexander Sutherland, the General Secretary of all Canadian Methodist missions. But to set the stage for this controversy we must return to a consideration of the material circumstances of the Northern Algonkians early in the 19th century.

The crisis of the 1820s is best documented ethnohistorically for the Northern Ojibwa of boreal forest Ontario (Bishop 1974, 1976, 1978), but there is reason to believe that it was also experienced by the Cree who inhabited the Nelson and upper Saskatchewan River drainages to the west. In fact historian Katherine Pettipas' research has convinced her that there was general and protracted famine in those regions in the 1830s (personal communication). The result was an

> increase of native migrations from York Fort, Norway House, and Cumberland House districts to the Red River Settlement [area of present-day Winnipeg, Manitoba]. In 1832, the Reverent William Cochran, incumbent at the Lower Church, reported that Northern Swampy Cree had been drifting in ". . . from year to year till the Settlement is really full of them" [Cochran 1832]. Attracted to the colony by the presence of their relatives, the availability of a relatively stable food supply, and the opportunity for employment, the immigrants, particularly those from Cumberland House, continued to move south. Native Christians residing at Red River had encouraged this movement by urging their relatives to come and share in the "better life." (Pettipas 1974:x)

Writing in 1844 to Hudson's Bay Company Governor Sir George Simpson, Chief Factor Donald Ross of Norway House called the Saskatchewan District "a thoroughly ruined country" (Hutchinson 1977:xv). Hutchinson goes on to say that "Chief Factor Ross had been asking for a missionary teacher at Norway House to stop the flow of natives towards Red River because of the missions there" (1977:xvi).

William Cochran, who was one of West's successors, devoted prodigious efforts throughout his lifetime toward the establishment of an agricultural mission among the Cree and Ojibwa of the Red River area.

> Initially the Reverend William Cochran had received support for the establishment of the Indian settlement at Netley Creek from [HBC Governor George] Simpson. The Governor viewed the Indian village as a means whereby the native population would be attracted away from the Red River Colony. More crucial to the direct interests of the Hudson's Bay Company was Simpson's argument that a concentration of natives about Netley Creek would effectively isolate native traders [probably meaning Indians with salable furs] from the growing competition offered by the free trader and the American trader. (Pettipas 1974:x, who cites Thompson [1962] as her source)

But as the village grew Simpson became increasingly concerned as it continued to attract trappers and their families from off the Shield where many of the Indians "were in fact starving" (Pettipas 1974:xii). In 1834 he withdrew permission for the project that he had given two years earlier. Cochran asked Simpson to put the order to vacate the settlement in writing, which Simpson refused to do. Cochran then ignored the order, but the machinations of the Hudson's Bay Company against Cochran's mission and all efforts involving Indian relocation were just beginning (Czuboka 1960:39, 50, 51). "This repressive policy of the Company continued until the end of its rule [in 1870] and it was a large factor in the failure of St. Peters" (Czuboka 1960:iii).

Hudson's Bay Company rule may have ended on the prairies in 1870, but it persisted de facto in the Arctic and Subarctic until well after the turn of the present century. The Company had not loosened its hold in the Oxford House district when an earnest young Methodist missionary named Frederick George Stevens was posted there with his bride in 1897. Stevens was one of those rare people blessed (or cursed) with the

ability to accept the evidence of his own senses, and with the courage to act on his convictions no matter what the opposition.

Frederick and Frances Stevens arrived at Oxford House late in June 1897. By July 12 he had assessed the living conditions of the native inhabitants and pronounced them untenable. Oxford House was Stevens' first independent assignment in the Methodist Indian service, but he had for more than two years previously assisted the minister at the Fisher River Reserve, about 110 miles north of the city of Winnipeg, and began his study of the Cree language there. When the Queen's representatives negotiated Treaty 5 with the Norway House Indians in the 1870s, some members of that band petitioned the government to set aside a reserve for them on arable land off the Shield where they could support themselves mainly by farming. This was done, and while the colony at Fisher River has never been the new Elysium, no one has ever starved to death there either. (I lived on the adjacent Peguis Reserve a few miles south of Fisher River in 1978-79.) It did not take Stevens long to decide that his new congregation would likewise be better off in more favorable circumstances. This goal at once became the highest priority of his ministry, and he never wavered from it no matter what the cost to himself.

While yet enroute from Norway House with an HBC boat brigade freighting supplies to Oxford House, Stevens was deeply affected by the conditions under which the Indians had to live and work. On July 12, 1897, Stevens penned a letter to the Methodists of Canada from which I now quote.

> What hard lives [the Indians] lead! Such hard work at the oar, and especially on the portages do they struggle under their

> loads. Up at 3 a.m., and working until darkness set in [sic]; all this with poor food, and scant measure at that. Imagine men working so hard on flour, pork and tea; the flour mixed with water and half cooked in the fire. (1897a:150)

It must be remembered that when Stevens speaks of "pork" he is not talking about ham or suckling pig, but salt pork, almost all fat, sometimes with the skin and even the bristles still on it.

> They spend their winters in the woods hunting fur; during this time they live in lodges composed of poles and moss. For two or three months of summer they congregate here [at Oxford House] and live in bark wigwams. Now they have a hard struggle for existence, and not from any fault of their own, but owing to the hard country they live in. . . . It is not because our men are too lazy to work; they are hard workers, and when they are given work they are very grateful. It is very sad to see the rivalry that exists among them when a job offers; they are all eager to get it. (Stevens 1897a:151)

Stevens was a keen observer, and there was an intensely practical side to his spirituality.

> Since my arrival I have been more and more convinced that something ought to be done to help our people to a better way of living. . . . I am convinced of their need spiritual and temporal. And while I am more especially interested in their souls, I am convinced that as soul and body have such close affinity the conditions of one must needs affect the other. (1897a:151-152)

> They are willing to settle down if a place can be found where they can make a living; they do not ask for charity, but for a chance to work, and others earn their own living [sic]. Can we not help them to do so? I think we can. Having observed the success that has attended the colony of Indians who removed from Norway House and settled at Fisher River twenty years ago, I am convinced that another colony would be successful. There is on the west shore of Fisher Bay a beautiful site for such a colony; I went over the ground a year ago, and it is good for farming and for grazing; fish and game are fairly abundant. My plan is this: Let us persuade our people here to go there and settle, and have a mission established there. The people might settle on lots of their own and would build houses and clear land the first year, and next year plant potatoes, etc.; these are always a sure crop, and they would furnish food with fish, etc., for the people. There our people could live, and being established in permanent homes, be trained and educated. Work

> is fairly plentiful around the lake [Winnipeg] and the men would earn good wages in bush work, but most of them could stay at home and thus have steady church privileges, and the children would have a chance to go to school regularly. There are many advantages to be found in such a settlement and few to be found here. The fact is, a settlement here seems to be impossible. The men here are looking for such, but cannot find a suitable place. (1897a:151)

Stevens concluded his missive with the statement that help would only be needed for the first year. After that he expected the new colony to become self-sufficient from farming, logging, and so forth.

On July 27, 1897, hardly a month after his arrival, Stevens drafted a letter ostensibly from the Indians of Oxford House to the Rev. Alexander Sutherland, D.D., General Secretary of the Methodist Missionary Society in Toronto. This letter was essentially a restatement of Stevens' missive of July 12 (1897a:150-151). The phraseology is pure Stevens, and the letter concludes with the paragraph:

> This request embodies the sentiment of most of the Oxford House Indians. This was read to some, and they desired me to sign it on their behalf, as they cannot write. (Stevens 1897b)

Sutherland was for many years the superintendent of all Canadian Methodist missionary activities both within the Dominion and abroad, and as such was Stevens' ultimate superior. Sutherland was at this time at the height of his influence and powers. He was a man of considerable eminence in both secular and ecclesiastical spheres, while Stevens was a very junior minister on his first independent assignment. It was not long before the two were to clash.

How reliable was Stevens as an observer? He had, after all, been at Oxford House a scant two weeks before be began petitioning the Methodists of Canada to fund a mass exodus from the north and an Indian resettlement program. By his own admission he lacked the confidence to

preach in Cree at that time (1897a:150). (He soon began to do so and quickly became fluent.) How could he have transcribed a long letter supposedly representing the innermost sentiments and aspirations of a group of people with whom he could communicate only with difficulty? He states that the letter was "read to some" (1897b). Why only some? who read it? and in what language? There is no mention of an interpreter. Was Stevens simply imposing what he thought was good for the Indians onto the situation, and representing his ideas as theirs? Was his just an ethnocentric overreaction to an uncontrolled case of culture shock because Northern Algonkian lifestyle did not conform to the dictates of his middle-class Victorian sensibilities? After all, phenomenologically oriented anthropologists like Richard Preston (1975) maintain that even though the boreal forest may seem like a harsh and relentless environment to outsiders, it does not present itself as such to the Cree who call it home.

Stevens was certainly impetuous, headstrong, and politically naïve. His religious faith gave him the sincere if unrealistic belief that if he could only make other Christians understand the seriousness of the Northern Algonkian situation, they, as he, would have no recourse but to work to change it. He had courage and determination, but his most exceptional gift was his ability to see things as they were and not allow himself to be dissuaded by anyone. Stevens could see immediately that the situation at Oxford House was not a viable one. And if conditions at Oxford House were bad, the circumstances under which the Sandy Lake Ojibwa lived were appalling. It was among these Indians that four known windigo executions occurred (Teicher 1960:63ff).

Stevens was not a dispassionate or impartial observer, but I believe him to be a generally reliable one. During the weeks I spent studying materials pertaining to Stevens in the United Church Archives in Toronto, nowhere was there the slightest suggestion that he went to Oxford House with any intention other than to be a conventional northern missionary. Looking with the benefit of 80 years' hindsight at the controversies in which Stevens was embroiled, I can say confidently that Stevens' observations have never been proved wrong. (He did, however, occasionally misinterpret information supplied by others.) As noted below, his successor at Oxford House saw the situation in essentially the same terms as Stevens did, and went on record saying so (McNeil 1904:x). And as we shall see, when the veracity of Stevens' report of starvation at Sandy Lake was challenged, he undertook a great canoe odyssey with his wife and son in order to bring back eyewitnesses to the disaster. This is not the sort of man to take liberties with the truth.

When Stevens penetrated into the Sandy Lake area in 1899, 1900, and 1901, he was one of the only serious observers to have visited the district since the departure of the Nor'westers in 1821, and the abandoning of the HBC post in 1823.

> In 1897 I was stationed at Oxford House and had God's Lake, Island Lake and unknown regions beyond [i.e. to the east] under my care. Church officials in Toronto and Winnipeg knew as much about these places as they did about central Africa, and even on Lake Winnipeg little was known beyond Oxford House. (Stevens 1943:1)

Stevens' recorded observations of the Sandy Lake Ojibwa are of crucial importance, and we will return to them after examining an illuminating exchange of correspondence between Stevens and Dr. Sutherland regarding

Stevens' migration initiative. These records come from the letter books of the Reverend Alexander Sutherland, and are preserved in the archives of the United Church of Canada, Toronto. Unfortunately, they consist only of Sutherland's outgoing correspondence. With certain exceptions incoming letters have not been preserved, but the letter books are nonetheless very instructive. Sutherland was not at first opposed to Stevens' plan, but he immediately took exception to the Stevens style. Excerpts from a letter of December 10, 1897, are reproduced below (Sutherland 1897a):

> There are some sentences, and even paragraphs in your letters that I would prefer to pass over in silence, only for the fear that silence might be misunderstood. To speak frankly, I do not like the tone of your references to the H.B. Co., or the men in its employ. The conduct of individuals may be just as you describe it, but that is no reason why we should court opposition and difficulty, or needlessly stir up enmity by strong denunciations. That is not the way to bring men to repentance, and to a better life. I am quite aware that the Company does not possess the autocratic power it once did, but among a large number of the Indians they have still greater influence than any other power, and while there is no call for any "fawning" on our part, there is just as little on the other for reckless censure. You may depend on it that in negotiations with the Government for the removal of the Indians of Oxford House or God's Lake to another part of the country, where their services will be lost to the H.B. Co., the opinions of that Company will have considerable weight, more especially as some of the officials are in close touch with the Government, and very influential in its councils.

Sutherland laid Stevens' letters before the Methodist General Board in Halifax, which instructed Sutherland to put the matter before the Government. Sutherland wrote to the Superintendent General of Indian Affairs requesting that some way be devised to carry out the project. But as Sutherland (1897a) reminded Stevens, "such a move in the case of the Oxford House, God's Lake, and Island Lake Indians might have to be followed by repeating the same in regard to other Bands

scattered through that enormous country, and doubtless the Government will examine the whole ground before committing itself to a policy that may involve heavy expenditure." While conceding to Stevens that his mission was to both the bodies and the souls of the people, so long as the resources of the Missionary Society remained limited, Sutherland's instructions were that "the care of their souls takes precedence" (1897a).

On December 15, Sutherland wrote to the Superintendent General of Indian Affairs in Ottawa requesting that the migration play be given consideration by the Government. He wrote that Stevens' letters referred to a state of affairs of which he was not previously aware. "In the course of years," wrote Sutherland, "hunting and trapping has become such a very precarious mode of securing a living that the Indians dispair of being able much longer to keep absolute starvation from their homes" (1897b). Whatever other misgivings Sutherland may have had about Stevens, he appears to have had complete confidence in the young missionary's veracity. I do not think he would have written the Government stating that the Indians were on the verge of starvation if he did not have good reason to believe it was true.

On June 30, 1898, Sutherland wrote to Stevens informing him that the plan had been rejected by the Government, but before passing on this piece of news Sutherland saw fit again to take Stevens to task for attacking the policy of the Hudson's Bay Company, and criticizing the management of the Canadian missions (Sutherland 1898a). In light of the government's refusal to set aside a reserve for emigrating Indians on Lake Winnipeg, Sutherland warned that any Indians who might

come out of the boreal forest "will run the risk of degenerating into wanderers" (1898a), and he denied Stevens the right to appeal for financial support for his plan in the Methodist publications. But although Sutherland now believed the northern Indians to be close to "absolute starvation" (1897b), he made no further reference to this fact in his correspondence with Stevens, and closed his letter of June 30 with the prayer "that your real work as a missionary may prosper beyond your most sanguine expectations" (1898a).

Although the Government refused to underwrite his project, Stevens still hoped to finance it through private church donations. On December 12, 1898, Sutherland wrote to Stevens informing him that since the Government had pronounced against the migration scheme, the Executive Committee of the Canadian Methodist Church now considered it to be impractical. He went on to suggest that individual Indians trained in southern Manitoba could be encouraged to settle in some promising locality "instead of returning to their former miserable environment" (Sutherland 1898b). Here again Sutherland does not dispute the fact that the Indians in Stevens' district were living a miserable life, thereby confirming the missionary's reliability. As General Secretary of all Canadian Methodist missions, he could have dealt with the matter by producing reports contradicting those submitted by Stevens. That he did not do so is a strong indication that no such contradictory reports existed, and I found none in my perusal of his letter books.

A copy of a letter from Stevens at Oxford House to Sutherland in Toronto has been saved in the letter books of the Methodist Missionary

Society because it was part of Sutherland's outgoing correspondence to John McDougall of Calgary. McDougall was at this time Superintendent of the Methodist Indian Missions in the Northwest, and Stevens' immediate superior. McDougall came from an old missionary family with strong secular connections. He had taught school at Norway House, learned to speak Cree, and then went west with his father, the influential George McDougall. The McDougalls were exceptional among working Methodist missionaries in their close identification with the interests and leadership of the Hudson's Bay Company. It was almost inevitable that John McDougall and Stevens should become antagonists. The combined opposition of Sutherland and McDougall undid the plans of the headstrong Stevens. Although Stevens probably never learned how these two men worked in concert against him, the story becomes evident by fitting together pieces of information retrievable from the United Church archives.

On May 30, 1899, Stevens wrote from Oxford House to Sutherland in Toronto. The young missionary charged that "for months back [the Indians] have been nearly starved right here at the doors of the Fort" (Stevens 1899). He went on to say that the Indians were not even adhering to their usual practice of large summer-long encampments at Oxford House, but were dispersing after only a few weeks. "This change," he wrote,"comes from the increasing poverty of the people" (Stevens 1899). Stevens accused his superior of discrediting him in the eyes of the people, stated his intention of carrying out his migration plan without church approval or assistance, and challenged Sutherland to either support him or dismiss him (Stevens 1899).

Not surprisingly, Sutherland chose the latter option and wrote to Stevens on August 30, 1899, notifying the young missionary of his termination (Sutherland 1899b). He warned Stevens: "I should be exceedingly sorry to discredit you . . . but on the other hand I am equally averse to having the Church discredited by an unwise course of action by a single missionary" (Sutherland 1899b). He also wrote: "Your proposal to bring out such Indians as will follow your lead, and dump them down at Fisher River, without the consent of the people on that Reserve, of the Government under whose control they are, must surely strike you . . . as an unwise thing to do" (Sutherland 1899b).

Stevens probably anticipated his dismissal, but what he did not foresee was Sutherland and McDougall working behind the scenes to sabotage his migration project, which he was now determined to implement as a private citizen. He had challenged Sutherland to "act" (Stevens 1899; emphasis in the original), and act Sutherland did. Quite literally. Stevens probably never knew what hit him. Sutherland's letter to McDougall of July 7, 1899, reads in part (Sutherland 1899a): "This project of [Stevens'] to bring out the Indians and dump them down on poor Steinhauer at Fisher River, stamps the brother as somewhat worse than visionary. If you can do anything to prevent the carrying out of this project by all means do so" (emphasis added).

Sutherland's conferral of carte blanche to McDougall with respect to Stevens' plan was not empty rhetoric. McDougall was the senior member of one of the most powerful families in western Canada at that time. As noted above, McDougall had very strong connections with the Hudson's Bay Company. In his typescript "Autobiography" Stevens blames

HBC personnel for sabotaging his migration project by withholding his mail from the Indians, but what he would not know is that it is probable that they did so at the instigation of McDougall and Sutherland.

Yet for all of Sutherland's castigation of Stevens as a visionary eccentric, in the annual report of the Methodist Missionary Society for the year 1903-04 Stevens' successor, The Rev. A. McNeil, echoed one of Stevens' main objectives (1904:x).

> [The well-being of the Indians], I think, could be greatly aided if some definite line of policy in settling the people could be agreed upon between the Missionary Society and the fur companies trading with the Indians. These latter do not look with much favor upon the settlement of the Indian, fearing, I suppose, that in the [fur] hunt being neglected [sic].

Stevens had criticized Sutherland and the Missionary Society for having no definite policy with regard to the Indian work (Sutherland 1898a), and Sutherland reacted strongly against Stevens for it. Yet here was McNeil saying the same thing. Could both men have been wrong? According to the Rev. James Ernest Nix, Deputy Archivist of the United Church of Canada and historian, the Indian work held a low priority for Sutherland at this time. He was far more concerned with the success of the more glamorous overseas missions, particularly those in China and Japan (Nix 1977:299-230 and personal communication). My research leads me to the conclusion that Stevens was a reliable and articulate—though certainly partisan—observer.

Stevens' observations of the Sandy Lake Indians are of special importance to this study. His first attempt to contact these people came at their request in 1897. A message was sent to Stevens via the Island Lake Indians and Stevens responded with a note suggesting a rendezvous at Island Lake on August 12 (Stevens 1943:1). The note was probably

at least partly in English, since Stevens probably could not speak fluent Cree nor write easily in syllabics at this time. The Island Lakers, not being able to read the date in the message, could not tell the Sandy Lakers what it said, so they took the note to the Island Lake HBC post manager, Robert Whiteway. According to Stevens, Whiteway deliberately misread the note, changing the meeting date to August 17 (1943:1, 3).

Stevens got along well with some of the HBC men, but between him and Whiteway there was to be bitter enmity. Any expedition to Sandy Lake from Oxford House would have to be mounted through Island Lake where Whiteway held sway. Stevens claims that Whiteway threatened to shoot him (1943:6), and had knocked down one of Stevens' guides and threatened the life of another after Stevens' expedition of 1899 (1943: 3). By the turn of the century the Company had given up the practice of retaining assassins to enforce its will (Godsell 1939:73-75; Campbell n.d.: 36), but it would be long before they would cease intimidating the Indians.

Stevens' 1899 trip met with almost as little success as his 1897 venture. By careful planning and logistics, Stevens managed to circumvent Whiteway and reached Sandy Lake, but missed the main body of the Indians. He and his guides managed to meet a group of about fifty starving people between Island Lake and Sandy Lake. "That night my man from Oxford House could not sleep so badly shaken was he by the wretched condition of these Indians. He had never seen the like before" (1943:2).

Stevens made secret arrangements with Jimmie Kirkness, the native HBC employee who had operated the Sandy Lake outpost as a satellite of

Island Lake since 1894 (Campbell n.d.: 36-37). Kirkness was to let the minister know when he was going to make his winter trip to Sandy Lake in time for Stevens to travel from Oxford House to Island Lake to join him. Stevens sent fish nets to Sandy Lake and Beaver Hill Lake (north of Island Lake) with requests that fish be caught and preserved to provide dog food for his forthcoming winter journey.

Stevens and his family were visiting God's Lake around February 1, 1900, when Kirkness' letter arrived. "I am leaving for Sandy Lake on February 8th" (Stevens 1943:4). After much hard traveling, Stevens and a companion caught up with Kirkness and a young HBC apprentice about three days out from Sandy Lake, arriving at their destination about February 13th. Once again Stevens found great hunger and destitution. According to him the Indians were reduced to eating boiled jackpine bark. The minister also took a keen interest in the trading. "A very little goods given in exchange for much valuable fur was one reason why Whiteway did not want me to contact these Indians" (1943:5). In an account written just after his journey, the missionary gave a somewhat different report (1900b:4).

> Saturday was spent by the Indians in trading their furs. This did not take long as fur is very scarce. I could not but remark the pitiableness of the thing when I saw men trading their fur in exchange for deer-skin, which had been imported from the "farther north." Things are come to a queer pass when the produce of the hunt has to be exchanged for what the hunt ought to produce in abundance.

The "deer-skin" was probably that of barren-ground caribou from the Company's posts above the tree line. In 1900 moose had not yet reestablished themselves in any number in the Sandy Lake area, and woodland caribou were few. Cervid hides were of great value to the Indians

in the manufacture of moccasins, mittens, and snowshoe webbing. Was the Company providing an essential service to the Northern Ojibwa, or gouging them as Stevens suggests? Further research is needed to answer this question. As to the issue of food, Stevens reported that "famine reigns through this whole region, both summer and winter" (1900:5). After several days at Sandy Lake, Stevens and his party began the long trip back to Oxford House.

> Between February and spring word drifted in by moccasin telegraph of deaths from starvation at Sandy Lake. That next June we went to [the Methodist] Conference in Brandon [in southwest Manitoba]. There I told of destitution and starvation, but I was not believed. When I arrived back at Norway House there was awaiting me there news of somewhat extensive starvation at Sandy Lake especially among the Little Cranes. It was late before I was able to get to Island Lake, too late to go to Sandy Lake. On making enquiries I was satisfied of the truth of the reports. I sent out to the [Manitoba] Free Press a news item—"At Sandy Lake which is a tributary to Island Lake, it is reported that over twenty people died of starvation in the winter of 1899-1900." (Stevens 1943:6)

After that, said Stevens in his autobiography, "the fat was in the fire" (n.d.: 25). The Indian Department asked the Hudson's Bay Company if they knew anything about it. The Honourable Company denied any knowledge, and in fairness it must be said that those responding probably did not have any such information. Efforts were made to discredit Stevens, apparently by enlisting the aid of his enemies within the Methodist Church.

> An attempt was made by the census taker to give my story of the starvation the lie. Presuming on the fact that he had reported that he had taken census at Sandy Lake, he published a statement that my report was untrue. When I was able to prove that he had not been near either Sandy Lake or Island Lake he was nearly charged with putting in fraudulent census figures.
>
> Rev. Dr. McDougall also, had placed a letter in the Free Press defaming my reputation. This had been challenged by the Conference Special Committee. . . . Conference met at Portage

> la Prairie. At it I had a stormy time. I brought a charge against Dr. McDougall. He pleaded guilty and I withdrew my charge. (Stevens, n.d.: 32)

Of course we are getting only one side of the story, but Stevens was nothing if not determined. He decided that the only way he could demonstrate the truth of his assertion was to return to Sandy Lake and bring back proof. He sent provisions to be cached at Island Lake, and in the Spring of 1901 set out with his wife and small son. "Mrs. Stevens requested that she and the boy go along with me. 'I cannot bear the uncertainty of not knowing if you are dead or alive'" (1943:6). After a long and very difficult journey during which the family suffered severely from hunger and exposure, Stevens finally rendezvoused with about two hundred Indians at Sandy Lake late in June 1901.

From the point of view of a missionary the meeting was productive. Stevens made mass conversions among the Little Cranes, but was less successful among the Suckers who, he claims, deceitfully left their women and children a short distance away because "They did not want to become Christians" (1943:9). (As we shall see in the following chapter, senior men of the Sucker's would later serve as windigo executioners.) But Stevens could do little for the corporeal needs of his new flock. They were still destitute, and they had been literally decimated by starvation the winter before last.

> The Little Crane Chief, Jacob [Linklater], and Adam Fiddler agreed to accompany me to Norway House and there tell their story of the starvation. They were eye witnesses of fourteen deaths. One whole family had totally disappeared. That made twenty-one. (Stevens 1943:8)

> In due time I went to Norway House. There we met Rev. John Semmens, who was pensioned and was now an Inspector for Indian agencies. To him the three men from Sandy Lake told their sad story. Mr. Semmens was deeply affected by their sad tale. He

reported the matter to the department of Indian Affairs. . . .

> I then went to Winnipeg. There the Indian Commissioner, the Hon. David Laird, and the Hon. James Smart, Deputy Minister of the Interior, were concerned and angry about the whole affair. The H.B.C. rightly blamed their failure on Whiteway who had sent in false reports. It was harder to fix the blame on anyone in the Methodist Church. (Stevens, n.d.: 31)

The controversy raged on, even reaching the halls of Parliament (Christian Guardian, Oct. 16, 1901:5), but Stevens eventually held the day. He returned to the Indian work in 1907 to spend many years at Fisher River where his mission to the natives of Canada had begun in 1894. The Rev. J. Ernest Nix, Deputy Archivist of the United Church of Canada, assures me that he would never have been allowed back into the Indian work unless he had been completely exonerated (personal communication), yet there was little he could actually do to meet the material needs of the Indians of the north. He died at Norway House in 1946.

Stevens' personal biases aside, I think he proved that conditions around Sandy Lake were often desperate late in the 19th and early in the present centuries. For people living so close to the brink of disaster, nursing a hopelessly sick person was an extravagance they could hardly afford. The delirious especially, because of the disruptive nature of their behavior, and because they required the constant attention of the able-bodied, must have strained the social fabric to the absolute limit.

Stevens' observations set the ecological and historical stage for an examination of the forensic windigo case materials. In this chapter we have seen that in the 19th and early 20th centuries the Northern Algonkians were not living under conditions of aboriginal equilibrium, but the reverse. They recognized the seriousness of their circumstances

and tried to escape them when they could. It will be argued in the following chapter that it was the conscious and unconscious recognition of their slim margin for error that resulted in windigo executions, and not cannibalistic obsession or behavior on the part of the executed victims.

CHAPTER IV
ANALYSIS OF THE ARCHIVAL CASE MATERIALS

This chapter presents analyses of case materials found in archival sources. Two of these sources—the Moostoos case and the Sandy Lake area cases—have been available to anthropologists for many years, but I disagree with traditional interpretations given them and offer my own. To the best of my knowledge, the remaining cases have never been analyzed by anthropologists and constitute a new body of evidence on the subject of windigo.

The materials contained in this chapter are not comprehensive. Unlimited time and money would doubtless enable me to track down intriguing leads and tie down loose ends. It is also possible that there are windigo cases documented in long-forgotten files of which I am completely unaware. This chapter will make it easier for subsequent investigators to research the historic, behavioral windigo.

Then, too, differences in interpretation are possible. I make no claim that my interpretations of these cases are the only ones that can legitimately be given them. But neither should my interpretations be dismissed lightly, for they are based on long-term associations with the Northern Ojibwa people, and a knowledge of that society from the inside and from without (see Chapter I). Using Hallowell's (1963) application of the term, I am perhaps the first "transcultural" professional anthropologist to have written on Algonkian matters since Schoolcraft.

Swift Runner

The first case considered is the oldest for which documentary evidence exists and also the only one in which cannibalism took place. The source is the Canadian Department of Justice capital case file no. 1731 for the year 1879, the Queen vs. Ka-ki-si-kutchun "The Swift Runner" (unpaginated). The file can be found in the Public Archives of Canada cataloged CR.G.13, C-1, Vol. 1417. The Swift Runner affair is one of Teicher's seventy cataloged windigo cases (1960:85-88), but Teicher did not have access to primary sources.

The facts in the case as revealed by the Department of Justice file are these: In the autumn of 1878, a Cree Indian named Kisickoway was camped with his extended family at a place called "the Long Lake," near the Athabaska River about four short days travel north of what is now the city of Edmonton, Alberta (see Figure 2). Camped with him was his daughter, Charlotte, her husband Kakisikuchin (also and hereafter known as Swift Runner), and their six children. There were three boys and three girls in the family. The eldest son, at about 15 years of age, was already a hunter. The youngest, a girl, was an infant only a few months old.

Late in the season, after the snow commenced to fall, Kisickoway's group broke camp at which time Swift Runner, his wife, and children forked off by themselves in a different direction from the others. Swift Runner's mother and brother also accompanied his family group.

If there was any underlying tension motivating this parting of the ways, there is no indication of it in the court record. On the Shield Subarctic such fissioning to winter camps would be routine. It is unknown what Swift Runner's group had with them in the way of

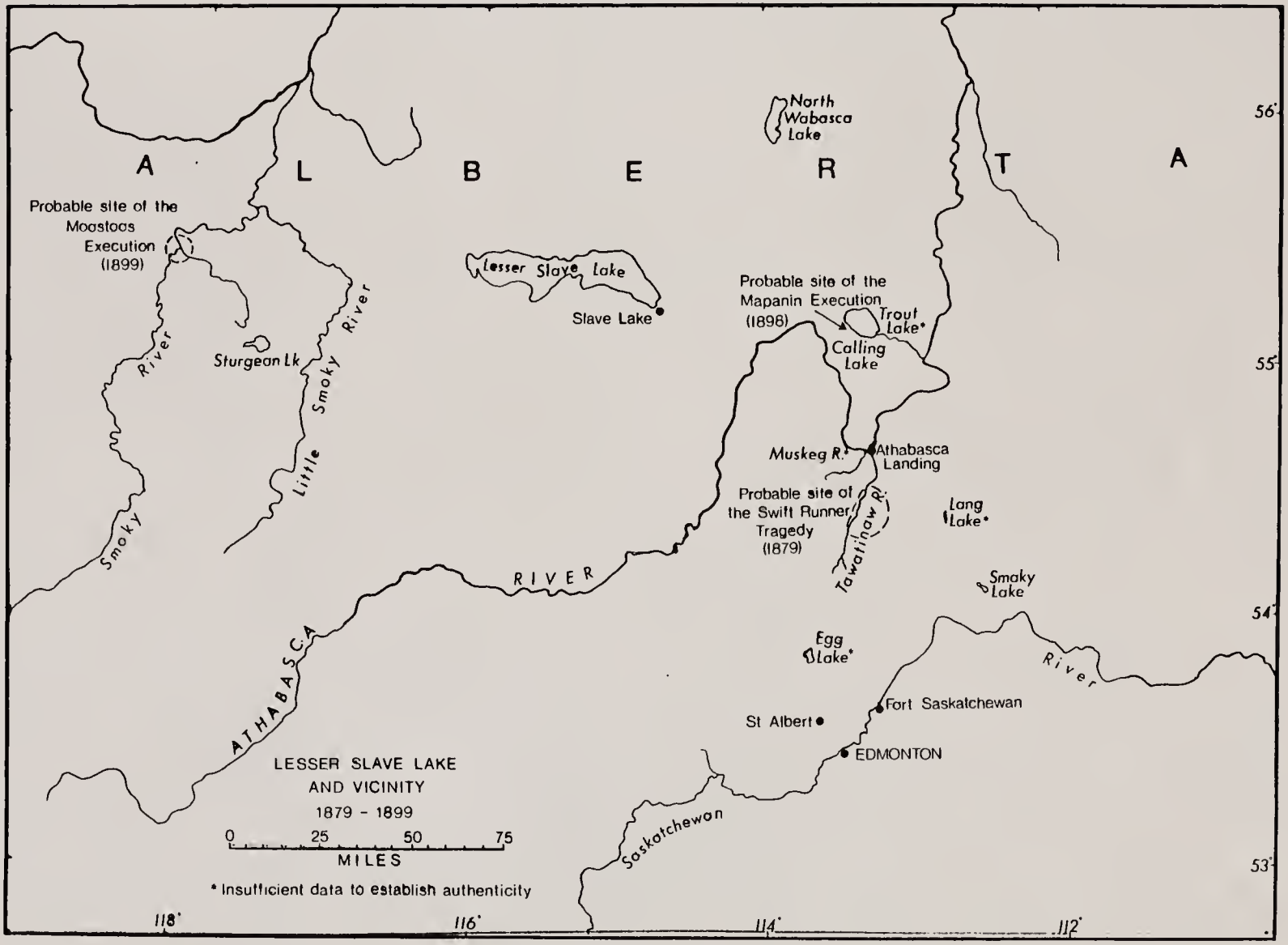

Figure 2. Lesser Slave Lake and Vicinity, 1879-99.

provisions, but they had ammunition and guns. Three of the party of ten—Swift Runner, his brother, and his eldest son—were able to hunt. All were said to have been in good health when they started. On leaving, Swift Runner stated that his destination was toward the landing on the Athabaska River.

No more was seen or heard of the party until early in the spring of 1879 when Swift Runner came into the Egg Lake Indian settlement alone, and told his father-in-law that the older man could not expect to see any of the family again as he, Swift Runner, was the only one left. He went on to say that his wife had shot herself, that two of the children had died, and he had buried their bodies as well as he could, and that the rest of his family had left him. He stated that his wife had shot two rabbits, after which time he was lying with his back toward her and she then shot herself. Then, he said, he started out for Egg Lake with his youngest boy and tried to make a fire in the woods so people would see it, but the fire would not burn. He tried to walk in carrying his boy on his back, but could not manage it and "had to give out." According to his father-in-law, Swift Runner did not look very poor or thin, as if he had been starving, when he arrived at Egg Lake in the spring.

The exact date of Swift Runner's vernal materialization is not known, but by the time interpreter George Washington Brazeau first saw him on May 27, he was in police custody. Brazeau and a Mounted Police constable took the prisoner to Edmonton where he was questioned on June first. Through Brazeau, Swift Runner told the Mounties that he was being kept in jail for nothing; that his wife shot herself and some of his family starved to death and he buried them. The story he told the police was this.

Starvation had come to his family because he was sick and could not move. He lost two of his children to starvation at the Muskeg River. He buried these children and then sent his wife and the rest of the children off to Egg Lake. His wife returned alone two days later. He and his wife then went to the place in the woods where she had left the children, and found them all dead from starvation except one little boy. He covered the bodies with leaves under a tree, left the place with his wife and little boy, and camped a short distance off. It was then that his wife shot herself because of the children dying. The little boy died near Smoking Lake. Swift Runner stated that there were four different places where the members of his family were buried, and he made a rough pencil sketch indicating where the graves could be found. He offered to go and point out the places.

RNWMP Superintendent William D. Jarvis acceded to this suggestion and dispatched Inspector Severe Gagnon, Staff Sergeant George Herchmer, and interpreter Brazeau to escort the prisoner to the gravesites. The party started out on June 4, 1879, and proceeded along the Athabaska Road from Fort Saskatchewan for about 40 miles. On the morning of the 5th, at the prisoner's guidance, the party forked off to the left and struck into the woods. After a few miles, they were forced to leave their carts and proceed by horseback.

The prisoner pointed out a course which he followed for some two miles. He diverged from this course at a place called Open Hill Creek. After a while he led the party to a muskeg, the edge of which was followed until late in the day. The party stopped and Brazeau asked Swift Runner if he knew where he was. The prisoner replied that he did

not know the place, that the party was lost, and that the graves could not now be found. Swift Runner asked Brazeau how much food the party had and was told that there was food for three or four days. The prisoner's response was that the provisions would give out and the graves would never be found. Brazeau told him that they would have to find them.

The party started again and, moving in a circuitous way, struck a kind of trail, indicated by marks on small trees. Brazeau asked the prisoner if it was his trail. Swift Runner replied that he didn't know. He was then asked if he knew where the first grave was. He replied in the negative, but shortly after the party came to a place Swift Runner was able to identify as the grave of his eldest son.

Inspector Gagnon had the prisoner removed some distance off, and with Staff Sgt. Herchmer (who had medical training), proceeded to examine the grave. They found the body of a 15-year-old Indian boy who had been carefully buried. The corpse was severely emaciated but showed no signs of having received foul play in life. After examining the body, Staff Sgt. Herchmer replaced it in the grave. Although it does not appear that Swift Runner saw the body exhumed, Inspector Gagnon reported that the prisoner "showed grief at this grave."

Brazeau asked Swift Runner if there were any more graves at that place. Swift Runner answered there were not. Brazeau then reminded the prisoner that he had told the interpreter before that there were two buried there. Swift Runner then said that he had told an untruth, but that all the rest were buried in one place. Brazeau asked if he could follow the trail to that place. Swift Runner answered that

there was no trail and he could not find the way. Brazeau asked if there had been a camp between the grave of his eldest son and that of the others. The prisoner replied he had camped once. Brazeau told him that they had better go and see that camp. Swift Runner said there was no use since there was nothing there, but pointed out the direction in which the other graves lay.

The party started out, but both Brazeau and Gagnon noticed that the prisoner did not travel straight, but backtracked and periodically changed course. As Gagnon later testified, "He seemed disinclined to go to the place he had indicated." Brazeau also noticed that their wanderings took them to a place that answered the description Swift Runner had given as the location of the graves. When this was put to Swift Runner, he replied that it was not the place; that the party was lost and would not be able to find the graves. But when the prisoner was asked if he knew of any open places nearby fit to camp for the night, he said a good place would be found 500 yards off and led the party immediately to it. At this campsite Inspector Gagnon observed a well-beaten Indian trail.

On stopping for the night Swift Runner proposed to Brazeau that the party search for his mother and brother, as the other graves could not be found. Brazeau told him that they must find the graves of the children and his wife, and if these bodies were found as he described them he would doubtless be allowed to go free.

Early on the morning of June 6, 1879, the party started out and quickly reached the spot where they had been the previous evening. Here Brazeau again remarked that it answered Swift Runer's first description,

to which he replied that it did somewhat, but if it was, nothing would be found as the bears would have eaten the bodies. Swift Runner suggested that they go to where he had buried the last child. They went on a little space and came to a spot where Swift Runner said he had camped. There the prisoner said, "I told you the bears would spoil the bodies." He pointed out a spot where his wife was buried, with three of the children buried at her feet and another buried near a tree. Swift Runner was removed out of sight, and the police proceeded to search the area.

Human bones and pieces of intestine were found in the campfire ashes. An examination of the spot Swift Runner pointed out as the burial place of his wife and youngest child revealed no indication of any grave. On scraping away some sticks and leaves, Staff Sgt. Herchmer found some bones and hair, and about two feet to the left a piece of cloth, evidently from an article of woman's clothing. Pieces of two human skulls were found. Another campfire place about 100 yards away yielded more human bones, including several skulls. The skulls and bones had all been boiled, and the long bones broken, apparently so the marrow could be extracted. The bones were in small piles all around the camp. Some of the nearby (birch? poplar?) trees were smeared with greasy finger marks. Staff Sgt. Herchmer's testimony reads:

> The bones found were those of children and at least one female "middle aged." Of the skulls all save one were those of children [,] one of quite an infant. The other skull is of an adult but I can't say if a male or female. My impression was strongly that it was of a female.

All the bones and skulls were collected and brought to the police station at Fort Saskatchewan. The prisoner produced some traps, a

fire-bag, and a kettle he had hidden in the bush, and proposed that the party proceed to the grave he had described near Egg Lake. Inspector Gagnon had to refuse his request because the party did not have enough provisions for that purpose.

A short time after Swift Runner was committed for trial, he requested to see Supt. Jarvis for the purpose of making a statement. He began by making a statement Jarvis took to be untrue, so the Superintendent sent him back to his cell. On the next day, June 15, Jarvis was again told that Swift Runner wanted to see him. Through Brazeau and in the presence of Jarvis and a Cree-speaking farmer named William Borwick, Swift Runner made and put his mark on the following declaration:

> I am going to tell the truth—I have done a great deal of harm. That is the reason I was backward with telling about it. I did not kill anybody else's children, only my own. I told you an awful lie. First I shot my son the next to the eldest. The eldest died. At the camp where your men found the bones, I killed all the rest except my youngest son which [sic] I killed near Egg Lake. I shot him through the back of the head. I shot my wife through the breast. The two little girls I knocked in the head with an axe. I choked the baby girl with a line. I know nothing about my brother and mother. My second boy I shot at a camp I did not show. A few days after my eldest boy died of starvation, I shot my woman and killed all the rest except my last boy at the same camp the same day—After eating my last boy I came on to Egg Lake where I stayed a little while, then I came on to St. Albert. My wife said nothing when I killed my second boy. I never threatened before to kill and eat my wife—I told you everything I know I have done.
>
> Signed
>
> Ka ki si kut chin
> his
> X
> mark

On August 6, 1879, Swift Runner was tried for murder before Stipendiary Magistrate Hugh Richardson, Esq. (Richardson was later to preside at the trial of, and pass the sentence of death upon, the Metis[1] leader Louis Riel. Riel had been charged with "high treason" for his

part in the Northwest Rebellion of 1885. His trial and execution have become the most controversial legal proceedings in Canadian history [Brown and Brown 1973:18].) Swift Runner's jury was composed of six men from leading Metis families in the Edmonton area. Every portion of the proceedings was translated into Cree, and the prisoner was assigned the services of William Rowland, a leading Cree-English scholar of the period, to ensure that he understood everything that transpired.

But Swift Runner had no legal counsel. He asked no questions of any of the witnesses, called no witnesses of his own, offered no statements of mitigating or extenuating circumstances, and when asked if he had anything to say to the jury replied simply,"No. I did it." Swift Runner was found guilty and was sentenced to death. The case was reviewed by the Department of Justice in Ottawa, which could find no reason why the law should not be allowed to take its course. Swift Runner was hanged at Fort Saskatchewan on December 20, 1879.

It is possible, as Teicher (1960:85-88) has done, to interpret this case as strong evidence for the existence of windigo psychosis, although Richardson, corresponding with his superior in Ottawa, wrote: "That he is possessed of intelligence rather above the ordinary Indian seemed clear. Neither was there any apparent symptom of insanity." But Richardson continued: "The wonder of all who knew the man and there are many such in and around Edmonton that being [sic], what could have led him to the commission of the outrage bearing in mind the readiness of access (even if reduced to starvation point) to where food supplies are always to be had in such cases."

In a private letter to Prime Minister Sir John A. MacDonald himself, one A. Campbell (the Minister of Justice?) concurred with Richardson's assessment of the evidence. "There seems no doubt that the murder was committed by the prisoner, and not under pressure of starvation but to rid himself of the trouble of providing for his family."

But the most damning piece of testimony comes from Swift Runner's own father-in-law. "Prisoner and his family were never so far away that they or the children could not readily have got into the Hudson's Bay Post at the River Landing without risk of starvation even if no game could be found." An easy answer to Richardson's question "What could have led him to the commission of the outrage?" is windigo psychosis, of course, and the case exists in the literature as a windigo incident (Teicher 1960:85-88).

As tempting as it is to dismiss the metabolic motive for the murders and the cannibalism in favor of an explanation relying on culturally patterned psychopathology, this option must not be taken overhastily. The trial testimony and Swift Runner's confession raise almost as many questions as they answer. I will argue here that, although we will now probably never know the full circumstances of the case, starvation was the primary motive for the killings and cannibalism. It should be noted that nowhere in the Department of Justice file is there any mention of windigo, nor of insanity, save Richardson's express denial of it.

In an account otherwise full of lies, Swift Runner first told interpreter Brazeau that starvation came to his family because "he was

sick and could not move." I find this perfectly plausible. Why didn't someone go for help before the situation became critical? We don't know. Possibly it was a simple case of misjudgment. What is clear is that Swift Runner's eldest son actually died of starvation. This was stated in Swift Runner's confession and confirmed by the police investigation of the body. With Swift Runner sick and the oldest boy dying or dead, the party would have been reduced from three hunters to one. Which brings us to the issue of Swift Runner's brother—the third hunter—and his mother. Here is a crucial question, for if it was as easy to get from Swift Runner's winter hunting area to a place where food supplies could be had, as some have said, what happened to Swift Runner's mother and brother? In his confession he stated, "I know nothing about my brother and mother." He would have had no reason to lie about this. He was confessing to six murders. Two more would have made no difference; he could only hang once.

I believe Swift Runner's stated ignorance of the fate of his brother and mother. Probably they struck off by themselves in search of aid sometime in the winter; whether before or after the killings started we do not know. By August they had still not shown up. We can only conclude that they were unsuccessful in their attempt to reach help and food and that they perished in the woods. What this says to me is that, contrary to conclusions drawn at the time, Swift Runner's family was in a desperate predicament and it was no easy matter for them to get from their winter camp to a place where food could be had.

Does this mean that Swift Runner was necessarily a psychologically well-balanced individual whose actions were the only rational choice

under the circumstances? By no means. Cree Indians are just as susceptible to psychological dysfunction as anyone else, and it is quite possible that the horrible situation in which Swift Runner found himself drove him to an at least temporary insanity. But neither should we conclude that Swift Runner killed and ate his family because of a culturally conditioned predisposition that filled him with a compulsive obsession to eat human flesh. I argue that if he had any other food to eat, he would have eaten it. His actions may have been reprehensible, but they were not evidence of an etic, behavioral, culture-specific psychopathology.

Moostoos

The Moostoos case is one of the most fascinating and perplexing of the documented windigo cases. It involved the killing of an Athapaskan Beaver Indian who was married into a Cree band. According to the Cree, Moostoos (sometimes called Louis or Louison) proclaimed his intention to turn cannibal on a night in March 1899 at a place called Bald Hill on the Smoky River, some distance west of Lesser Slave Lake. The Cree account has it that Moostoos begged to be killed and was finally accommodated.

Corporal Charles Phillips, the investigating RNWM police officer stationed at Lesser Slave Lake, drafted a report to his superior at Fort Saskatchewan on April 3, 1899. A copy of this report is preserved in the Public Archives of Canada (1899) in Ottawa (unpaginated). Depositions of witnesses, including those of Corp. Phillips, were taken at Fort Saskatchewan on April 24 and July 25, 1899. These have been recovered from the files of the court at Edmonton, Alberta (EFC 1899) (partially paginated). The trial itself was held at Edmonton around

August 10, 1899. Despite my best efforts, I have been unable to locate the transcript of this trial, and I believe it probably no longer exists.

The court copy of the evidence given at the trial was sent to David Boyle, editor of the Annual Archaeological Report and curator at the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto. The man who furnished the transcript was John R. Boyle of the law firm of Taylor and Boyle in Edmonton (AAR 1903 [1904]:126). In David Boyle's words (1903:127):

> The extracts being presented here as an ethnological, and to some extent, as a psychological contribution rather than as a legal one, they are not given in the order of presentation at the courts, and, for the same reason, by far the larger portion of the evidence is omitted.

What this means is that Boyle's synopsis as it appeared in the Annual Archaeological Report 1903 (1904:126-138) is a hodgepodge of extracts from the depositions given at Fort Saskatchewan in April and July, and the trial held at Edmonton in August. The only way to distinguish one from the other is to recognize extracts from the depositions, and by the process of elimination, assume that what cannot be found in the depositions are extracts from the trial. Even so, the extracts are out of context and sequence. Extracts from the depositions are edited paraphrasals and not completely true to the originals. There is no reason to assume that the extracts from the trial depart from this pattern. Boyle also makes mistakes in fact. For example he twice identifies Eliza, one of the most important witnesses, as the wife of Kunuksoos (1903:126, 135), when actually "Mekoostiquanis" was her husband (ECF).

The testimony given in this case is noted for its inconsistency from start to finish, but two "phases" can be distinguished. In the pretrial investigation a concerted effort was made by the witnesses to fix the blame on Payoo (the spelling follows Boyle), a man who seems

to have been marginal to the rest of the group. In fact I will argue that an attempt was made to "frame" Payoo into taking sole legal responsibility for the killing. At the trial, the weight of evidence seems to have shifted and it was determined that Payoo did not strike Moostoos until after the unfortunate man was dead.

The facts of the matter, as they can be pieced together, are these. In the winter of 1898-99 a band of Cree trappers was camped on the Smoky River west of Lesser Slave Lake. There were approximately thirty-three people in the group, about eleven of whom were adult men. Moostoos, the executed man, joined the group in mid-winter, coming from Sturgeon Lake. Moostoos and his family lived in a shack with his two brothers-in-law, Chuckachuck and Apishchickisaynis. Both of these men were married and each had a child. Moostoos and his wife, Julie, apparently had four children since Napaysosus testified there were "three men, three women and six children in the house" (AAR 1903 [1904]: 129). One other shack and a few tents completed the camp.

Late in the winter several of the band became sick. Among those stricken was Moostoos who, according to the others, became obsessed by the idea of killing and eating his companions. According to the testimony given, Moostoos begged to be killed so that he would not become the instrument of death for the others. He spoke words such as, "You will all die tonight unless you kill me first" (ECF:3) and "How would it do if I should eat the little ones, and especially their noses?" (AAR 103 [1904]:130). Moostoos "floated right off the ground" and it was a hard job to reach up and bring him back down to earth (1903:130). He struggled a bit, but his teeth only tore clothing. A blanket was

thrown over his head and one of the women whipped him in the face with a plaited cord until the blood soaked through.

The statements made in the witnesses depositions and later in court are sometimes contradictory, and the sequence of events is not completely clear, but it seems certain that Moostoos was struck on the head with an axe by his brother-in-law Chuckachuck, as well as by Napaysosus and Payoo. Other members of the band also participated in the execution. He was struck on the chest with an axe and a knife driven into his bowels. One of the women may have stabbed him in the chest with a file. Later, the woman who had whipped him ran a two-pronged iron instrument into his leg. The dead man's legs were tied with trap-chains and tethered to a stake. At some point, he was disemboweled. A vigil was kept over the body all night to see if it would come to life with the dawn. Before daybreak hot tea was poured into the thoracic cavity to melt the ice that was thought to be growing there and was believed to be the source of the evil. In the morning the body was beheaded and a stake was driven through the chest wound, pinning the body to the ground. A knife was driven through the abdominal cavity into the mud floor of the shack (ECF 1899; PAC 1899; AAR 1903 [1904]:126-138).

Soon after the killing, Moostoos' erstwhile friends and relatives set out for Lesser Slave Lake. News of the execution preceded them, and Corporal Phillips met them enroute on March 30. The party of Indians was camped in the bush. They hailed Phillips, Constable Warren, and Interpreter Plante, and said that they were the Indians the police were looking for. Phillips questioned Entominahoo, the headman, asking

him who had done the killing. Entominahoo hesitated, then asked Phillips if he had met anyone on the road. Phillips answered that he had met Payoo seven miles from Lesser Slave Lake. (This puts Payoo at a great distance from the main party in a relatively short time, for Phillips reported this camp to be fifty-four miles away from the police barracks at Lesser Slave Lake [PAC 1899].) Entominahoo then said, "That's the man that . . . killed Moostoos," and Napaysosus cut the head off the body (ECF 1899). Phillips arrested Napaysosus, detained Chuchachuck as a witness, and went to examine the body. After investigating the scene of the killing, Phillips buried Moostoos' remains near the shack on the bank of the Smoky River (ECF 1899).

The police patrol returned the same day to the Indian camp to find the "natives wildly excited" over another cannibal scare (ECF 1899). It was Phillips' opinion "that had we not returned another murder would have been added to the list" (ECF 1899). According to Phillips, "Another of this camp wish[ed] to become Cannibal" and "we were employed watching this man all night, keeping the prisoners also in close view, and not one individual in that camp closed his or her eyes owing to the fear they entertain 're these cannibals'" (ECF 1899).

But Corporal Phillips does not identify the man who "wished to become a cannibal" on the night of March 30, 1890. He does not give any evidence that this man actually expressed cannibalistic inclinations in words or actions. He seems to accept the native point of view at face value in this instance. According to testimony given at the trial, yet another man—Napaysis—was suspected of turning windigo <u>before</u> Moostoos' execution (AAR 1903 [1904]:130, 132, 133). Napaysis was dying at the

time of Moostoos' execution (AAR 1903 [1904]:132), but we do not know the date of his death. Was it Napaysis whom Phillips and Warren guarded on the night of March 30-31, or someone else? If it was someone else, then three of the eleven adult males in the group (27%) were accused of windigo possession in less than a week.

The next morning Phillips and his party with Napaysosus and Chuckachuck set out by horse-drawn sleigh for the police post at Lesser Slave Lake. They arrived at the barracks around midnight. Payoo was presumably arrested at Lesser Slave Lake soon thereafter. On April 5 Phillips and his prisoners set out for Fort Saskatchewan, but Chuckachuck, his principal witness, took sick on the way. Phillips was forced to leave Chuckachuck with others at Athabaska Landing, and proceeded to Fort Saskatchewan with his two prisoners. A team was dispatched from Fort Saskatchewan to bring in Chuckachuck, but he died at Athabaska Landing on April 16 (ECF 1899; PAC 1899).

The death of Chuckachuck was a serious setback to the government's case. Phillips left again for Lesser Slave Lake in May, presumably having waited until the snow cover melted and the ice "came up" on the lakes. He returned to Fort Saskatchewan on July 14 with nine witnesses. This time he was taking no chances, and both the prosecution and the defense had requested that certain witnesses be brought in (PAC 1899).

A preliminary hearing was held at Fort Saskatchewan on July 25, and the trial was held at Edmonton at the beginning of the second week in August 1899. Payoo was acquitted; Napaysosus was found guilty of manslaughter and sentenced to two months imprisonment (AAR 1903 [1904]: 138). I will now analyze the Moostoos case making a series of

inferences supported by my interpretation of the documentary evidence.

Inference 1: A deadly illness was sweeping over the camp.

Evidence: In addition to Moostoos, Napaysis was "dying" (AAR 1903 [1904]:132). And all during the fright and commotion surrounding the killing of Moostoos, Apishchikisaynis was lying sick in the same hut with a blanket over his head, and may not have even been aware of what was happening (ECF 1899:15-16; AAR 1903 [1904]:131). Entominahoo, the headman, testified that "I was sick at that time. . . . [and] Mikkoostkwanis was lying in his house sick" (AAR 1903 [1904]:133). Chucka-chuck was apparently healthy at the time of the execution, but within three weeks he too would sicken and die (PAC 1899; ECF 1899). We do not know what the disease was, or what toll it took among the women and children. It could have been a form of influenza. Once again assuming the figure of eleven adult men is correct, then at least six of them would be stricken, five at the time of the execution.

Inference 2: Moostoos was one of those afflicted with the illness, and one of his symptoms was delirium.

Evidence: Moostoos "was supposed to be going crazy" (ECF 1899). His struggles, ravings, and teeth-grinding are completely consistent with delirium caused by a high fever. It is possible that the specific manifestations of his delirium were culturally conditioned by the windigo belief complex. But I find it unusual that a Beaver Indian was killed by a group of Crees on the grounds that he had turned into a monster that existed in their cosmology, not his. I also believe it to be more likely than not that Moostoos' ravings were in the Dene language instead of in Cree. Was Moostoos threatening to kill and eat them all? His

executioners said he was. They also said that he was levitating above their heads (AAR 1903 [1904]:130). If they could be wrong about that they could also be wrong about the substance of his delirious speech.

Moostoos was said to have predicted his transformation into a windigo, both immediately before his metamorphosis and as far back as the previous summer (AAR 1903 [1904]:130, 132). But in five years among the Northern Algonkians it was rare that a person was not said to have predicted his or her own death or other disasters. The cultural pattern among these people is for stories of this sort to begin after the fact. I never heard it said that X predicted his death when the death of X followed. But many times I observed the case where a person would die, and then in a matter days the story would begin that the deceased had predicted his or her own death. Almost all tragedies are "predicted" in this way.

Inference 3: The group was under severe stress, and may have been strained to the limit.

Evidence: The group was composed of thirty-three people, most of whom had been encamped at the same spot all winter. It was March, late winter at that latitude. The deceased and his family had recently joined the group, coming from Sturgeon Lake shortly after the new year. (Had they brought the pathogen with them? It is an interesting possibility.) The thirty-three persons in the camp are supported by the exertions of from eight to eleven hunters, and probably about the same number of women. The headman is hard of hearing and probably past his prime as a hunter ("Note. The witness is deaf" [ECF 1899:12]).

Then sickness strikes the camp. Five of the hunters and an unknown number of women and children are taken ill. At least one man (Napaysis) is dying and needs constant attention (AAR 1903[1904]:132). But what is worse is that another man (Moostoos) is delirious and raving, and requires the efforts of several people—including almost all the able-bodied men—to hold him. According to Entominahoo the sickness had so weakened the party that "Napaysos[us], Chuckachuck and Kunuksoos were the only three men strong enough to be of any use to hold him" (1903:133). If conditions in central Alberta around the turn of the century were anything like those of contemporary northern Manitoba and Ontario, this would have to be a very serious, stressful, and frightening experience for the people involved. There is no way they could have provided intensive nursing care for perhaps half their number—especially if one was delirious and violent—and have retained the mobility and flexibility it takes to survive in a harsh environment. They were afraid and they had good reason to be afraid. Fear sets the stage for hysteria, but it also is an inducement to triage homicide.

The following quotes from the Annual Archaeological Report 1903 (1904) give stark testimony to the terror the people experienced at the time: "I was so afraid I did not know whether I was alive or dead" (p. 139). "I believed we all had to die" (p. 132). "Everyone called out, 'We are dead'" (p. 136). "There was no person in the house in his right senses" (p. 137).

Inference 4: The generalized fear caused by the epidemic was, by means of the windigo belief complex, focused onto Moostoos, the most disruptive of the sick people.

Evidence: The evidence in the Moostoos case that gives strongest support to my thesis, that the windigo phenomenon is not a psychosis of individuals but a function of group dynamics, is the unequivocal statements in the legal record that it was not Moostoos who was first suspected of being a windigo, but the dying man Napaysis. Entominahoo: "We thought Napaysis was going Wehtigoo" (AAR 1903 [1904]:133). Payoo: "Napaysis was going to turn Wehtigoo first"(p. 132). And Napaysosus: "The other man, Napaysis, was going that way too, but he was sick weak, and it was not hard to subdue him, but we could not do anything with Moostoos" (p. 130).

I contend that the group was ready for a windigo, but who would it be? At first it looked as if it would be Napaysis, but Napaysis was very weak. It was more to the group's advantage to focus their fears on the most troublesome of the sick men and subject him to triage homicide. When they asserted that Moostoos, had he been allowed to live, would have been the cause of death to them all, they may very well have been correct in an etic and behavioral sense. But it was not because Moostoos was a cannibal. It was because he was critically disruptive to group functioning. Why, by the group's own account, were they ready to charge Naypasis with windigo possession? Was he, too, threatening to kill and eat them all? We have no indication of it. The reason that no such "evidence" exists is that no rationalization after the fact was necessary. Napaysis died on his own. A few days later, according to Corporal Phillips' report, they were ready to execute another man as a windigo cannibal (PAC 1899). This could have been Napaysis again, or it may have been someone else.

That there was an element of scapegoating in Moostoos' execution comes from the fact that a blanket was thrown over his head and he was whipped in the face by one of the women with a plaited, beaded belt until his blood soaked through the blanket. This immediately preceded his execution and there are no fewer than seven references to it in the Annual Archaeological Report 1903 (1904:128, 129 [twice], 130, 132, 136, 137). If someone is to be used as a scapegoat, the first thing that must be done is to deprive him of his human identity. In this case a blanket is thrown over his face. He is no longer Moostoos, friend and relative, but a dehumanized creature, the whirling vortex of their fears and frustrations. Eliza scourges the face under the blanket and sings out. Is this the way to handle a windigo, a creature of super-human strength? One would do as well to whip an enraged grizzly bear in the face. In her left hand Eliza holds an axe. She hands it to Chuckachuck. Chuckachuck strikes. Another windigo is slain.

Inference 5: Entominahoo, the shaman, probably identified Moostoos as a windigo, then attempted to fix the legal responsibility for the killing on Payoo.

Evidence: It is generally understood by anthropologists that one of the principal functions of shamanistic leaders in band-level societies is to intuit public opinion, or group feelings, and give expression to those opinions and feelings. The skill of the shaman is in doing this correctly. If he misinterprets public opinion with any frequency, his reputation, and perhaps his life, are forfeit:

> Shamans play an important role in the maintenance of law and order in prestate societies by blaming misfortunes on individuals who can be killed or ostracized without damaging the fabric of social unity. (Harris 1975:539)

And if someone is to be accused of witchcraft or spirit possession, the shaman does well to choose someone without strong kinship backing. (Usually this backing comes through one's father or brothers rather than from affinal relatives.)

Moostoos, as an outsider, fits into this category of potential accusee. He was an Athapaskan Beaver Indian accused by a group of Algonkian Crees of having succumbed to a Cree malady. Although he was married into the Cree group and spoke Cree, and several people made a point of mentioning how well-liked he had been, the fact remains that he was an outsider. If scapegoats are required, minorities and outsiders always make prime candidates.

It seems certain that Entominahoo made the diagnosis in the Moostoos case, or at least confirmed it. "It is only my own husband who knows anything about Wehtigoos," testified Entominahoo's wife, Marie (AAR 1903 [1904]:134). Entominahoo himself said, "Then in the evening we saw he was thinking something wrong about us" (ECF 1899:7; AAR, p. 128). We saw he was thinking something was wrong about us! How could Entominahoo "see" what Moostoos was thinking?

Referring to Moostoos' alleged threat, "If I get up from here, I'll kill you all," Entominahoo testified:

> It was only I that heard him say that before they got hold of him [italics added]. He and I were alone in the morning. I then tried to cure him with the medicine. It was late at night that we commenced to hold him down. Nothing was wrong with him in the daytime lying asleep. By his movements, we took hold of him [italics in original]. He was going to jump up. (ARR 1903 [1904]:133)

But Justice of the Peace A. Ross Cuthbert notes that Entominahoo was "deaf" (ECF 1899:12). We can interpret this to mean hard of hearing,

since the headman was obviously not totally deaf. It is very curious that Moostoos' initial threats of murder and cannibalism were first heard only by a man who was partially deaf. As Harris points out, "Shamans are usually personalities who are psychologically predisposed toward hallucinatory experiences" (1975:527). This is consistent with my observations of Cree and Ojibwa shamans. I believe that, because the group was experiencing so much fear as a consequence of the epidemic, they were in a state of heightened suggestibility and were more amenable than ever to Entominahoos' spiritual and secular leadership.

"The practice has been to kill Wehtigoos," testified Entominahoo, "but it is not everyone who can kill a Wehtigoo. It took the strongest medicine men to kill a Wehtigoo" (AAR 1903 [1904]:134). As in any witch-hunt the person who identifies the "evil" and contributes to its destruction, gains correspondingly in prestige.

When Corporal Phillips met Entominahoos' band on March 30, 1899, only a few days after Moostoos' killing, Payoo was already almost 50 miles east of the others. At this time Entominahoo identified Payoo as the killer (ECF 1899:17-18). At the inquiry of July 25 Entominahoo (p. 8), his wife Marie (p. 14), and Eliza the belt scourger (p. 2) all swore that Payoo struck the first, or death-dealing blow. This was refuted by subsequent testimony at the trial. Napaysosus said: "Cannot understand why the others swear that Payoo struck the first blow. It is not true" (AAR 1903 [1904]:130). Entominahoo changed his story at the trial (p. 133). It was finally agreed that Payoo was not even in the shack when the first two axe blows smashed in Moostoos' head, although he was urged to strike when he entered and he did strike.

"They are lying when they say I struck the first blow," said Payoo. "They are all related to one another and I am alone among them. When I went in the man was dead, and no one was holding him" (p. 131). In his manipulation of events Entominahoo was very nearly able to score a shamanistic grand slam. An outsider was the victim of his witch-hunt, and an outsider almost took the blame.

On the surface the Moostoos affair appears to be a textbook case of "windigo psychosis." All the symptoms are present: depression, anorexia, disoriented behavior, a preoccupation with cannibalistic thoughts and a concomitant horror engendered by those thoughts, the expression of the desire to be killed before the evil within him caused him to destroy his companions, and finally the execution—the execution that flows from community consensus or sometimes, as in this case, is a community activity.

But beneath the surface we can see another story emerging. It is the story of a group of Woods Cree who are terrified by an epidemic; who are reduced to immobility by the necessity to tend to their sick, including half of their mature hunters; who are completely unprepared to deal with the ravings of a delirious man; who in their frightened state are increasingly amenable to the suggestion of their shaman that it is an outsider who is at the root of their problems. As a means of coping with their fear they employed a variant of the Algonkian windigo myth as a convenient vehicle for scapegoating and triage homicide. They turned on and killed a Beaver Indian whose Cree name was Moostoos (Bison), who was himself sick and delirious, and who happened to be living among them.

The Four Sandy Lake Area Cases

The killing of Wasakapeequay (Mrs. Thomas Fiddler) at Sandy Lake late in the summer of 1906 is the best documented windigo execution extant. David Boyle this time resisted the temptation to excerpt fragments of court testimony and reproduce them out of sequence in the Annual Archaeological Report as he did four years before the Moostoos case. Almost the entire transcript of the trial held at Norway House on October 7, 1907, appears to be reprinted in the Annual Archaeological Report for that year (1908:91-121).

In the course of this trial, testimony was given concerning three other windigo executions that had taken place in the Sandy Lake area. Together these cases constitute four of Teicher's (1960) compendium of seventy cases. While information on the other three cases is sketchy, they seem to conform generally with the pattern of the Wasakapeequay execution, and differ strongly from the pattern of panic and collective suggestibility evident in the events surrounding the Moostoos killings.

The ecological context and ethohistorical background of the Sandy Lake Ojibwa were presented in Chapter III, along with F. G. Stevens' observations of these people made about five years before the killing of Mrs. Fiddler. Additional background information comes from the diary of William "Big Bill" Campbell (n.d.), a Scot who entered the service of the Hudson's Bay Company as a very young man, and served in the fur trade in northern Manitoba for many years. Campbell spoke Cree and the Severn Ojibwa dialect as well as English and Gaelic.

As was shown in the last chapter, the HBC post at Sandy Lake was closed in 1823, two years following the absorption of the Northwest

Company by the Hudson's Bay Company. The HBC was more powerful than ever and now enjoyed a monopoly situation. After amalgamation, the Sandy Lake Indians had a long way to go to trade. The Island Lake post was not operated consistently until 1865 (Wells, personal communication, 1979), but by the end of the 19th century, most of the Sandy Lake Indians were coming into Island Lake at least once a year to trade. The Island Lake and Sandy Lake peoples are closely related, and the language of the two groups is virtually identical. Campbell was in charge of the Island Lake post on and off late in the 19th and early in the 20th centuries. In 1894 Campbell established a winter outpost at Sandy Lake as a satellite of the Island Lake post, and put Jimmie Kirkness—a native HBC employee in whom he had little confidence as a businessman—in charge of it. In Campbell's words, "The Crane and Little Sucker Bands would now be able to visit Sandy Lake and buy supplies during the winter. Thus enabling them to trap and hunt [furs] throughout the season instead of the spring only as formerly" (n.d.: 36-37).

For many years before the Wasakspeequay killing, Campbell had been concerned about the homicides in the Island Lake—Sandy Lake district. Two 1893 incidents serve to illustrate his concern.

> Using three canoes I returned to Island Lake, arriving on the tenth of October. There were a few Indians camped around the post and measles had got amongst them. A few deaths occurred.
>
> In November an Indian hunter from Gull Harbour thirty miles south on the Lake came in to the post with a small collection of furs. He reported that measles got amongst the camp and one young newly married man became delirious which to the native is turning into a Weetigo or Cannibal. His mother and relations advised that he should be destroyed. One of the members of the camp not being related was told to shoot him which he did. I was vexed at hearing of the murder of this promising young man. I reported this murder to J. K. McDonald who was a Magistrate,

> he reported it to Lieut' Governor Schultz who wrote that while he regretted to hear of the murder he hoped there would not be any expense incurred in connection with it. (n.d.: 36)

There is not enough information here to offer a "functional" explanation for this killing, but in Campbell's account we get no hint of cannibalistic desires or actions. Indians do tend to develop high fevers and delirium from measles, as can be confirmed by information from my informants and by other observations dating back to the 17th century. And as Boyd and Sheldon have written, "in aboriginal communities where the disease has been unknown, it behaves with the fury of smallpox, and the mortality rate is high" (1977:144). It is possible that the Indians realized the quality of contagion present in a person infected with measles, etc., and a contributing factor in the decision to execute the sick was to halt the spread of epidemics.

Senilicide was apparently the motive for an incipient windigo execution Campbell was able to forestall in 1893, and the potential executioner was none other than Jack Fiddler ("Masenawenenew"), one of the Wasakaappeeguay's executioners thirteen years later.

> In March two Indians coming in from Nootin (Windy [Favourable]) Lake one hundred and eighty miles away in five days travel. [Favourable Lake is about 30 miles southeast of Sandy Lake.] The old chief of the Little Sucker band (Masenawenenew) sent them to report to me that his mother was very sick and appeared to be turning Weetigoo. He wanted my advice as to what action he should take. I knew he wanted my sanction for her effacement in the usual Indian manner. I had some good Scotch Whiskey and sent him about sixteen ounces. Instruct that she was to be given several doses and it would effect a cure.
>
> When a great fleet of canoes comprising the Crane and Little Sucker bands arrived in June with their furs, Masenawenenew:—who was in charge of his band, came to me with a broad smile on as he said:—Ha; Ogemaw, Kagat ne ge nisaw nenga, "Master I nearly had to kill my mother." The medicine you sent me was very powerful. I gave some to my mother, and put some in the fire for

> a burnt offering to the spirits. The medicine blazed up so I knew that it would effect a cure. Twice I gave her some more, then she fell asleep. After many hours she woke up and wanted to smoke, she was cured. The old woman must have got very drunk but it saved her from being burnt or strangled. (n.d.: 35).

Campbell's concern about the homicides in his district continued to grow, and in 1906 he decided to ask the police in Norway House to visit the Northern Ojibwa and make them aware of Canadian law. This led indirectly to the arrests in the Wasakapeequay execution.

> I went to Norway House in March and met Sergant [sic] (Daisy) Smith of the R.N.W.M. Police. I asked him to send out one of his Constables to Island Lake to interview and instruct the natives. Murders were committed every year but I did not mention any late cases. Constable O'Neil [the man's name was J. A. W. O'Neill was sent out with me when I returned to my Post. Shortly after our arrival the servants talked of some of the murders that had been committed lately. O'Neil, hearing the news, sent word to Sergant Smith that he was proceeding to arrest two Murderers out at Sandy Lake. Smith sent Constable Cashman out to assist. They both went out with my spring trading expedition for Sandy Lake. I gave them Kirkness as their interpreter. O'Neil and Cashman returned in July bringing two of the Little Sucker Band; Misinawinenew, and his half brother, Pesequan who had strangled a woman. The former was the Indian I had sent the Whiskey to, to cure his mother when she was becoming Weetigo in 1893. (Campbell n.d.: 44; cf. O'Neill 1908:159-161)

The suspects and two witnesses were brought to Norway House in June, 1907, to await trial. As the summer passed into fall, prisoners and witnesses became more and more homesick, and according to Sgt. D. B. Smith, the NCOIC of the detachment, "They have not been in good health and know nothing of white men and their ways" (PAC 1907-09). On the morning of September 30, 1907, Misinawinenew, also known as Jack Fiddler, wandered away from the breakfast campfire and was seen to be loosening his sash. His escort, thinking the old man was going to answer a call of nature, let him go. When he did not return after ten minutes, the alarm was sounded. About 3:00 p.m. Fiddler's body was

found lying on its back on a large flat rock between two trees. He had fastened his sash around his neck in a slip knot, tied the end to one of the trees, and strangled himself (PAC 1907-09).

The surviving prisoner was tried a week later in the council chamber of the Hudson's Bay Company post at Norway House before a specially empaneled jury of six men. The presiding judge was "Colonel A. Bowen Perry, Commissioner of the Royal Northwest Mounted Police, having all the jurisdiction, powers, and authority of a stipendiary magistrate" (AAR 1907[1908:91]). A stenographer was present and what appears to be a verbatim account was sent to David Boyle, who reproduced it "in extenso" in the Annual Archaeological Report 1908 (pp. 91-121).

The defendant never took the stand on his own behalf. This was his choice, and presumably he made it without duress and with the understanding that it was his right to testify (p. 114). Indeed, he first "pleaded guilty, and the Crown Counsel requested that a plea of not guilty be entered, considering the exegencies of the case; whereupon the Commissioner directed that a plea of not guilty be entered accordingly" (p. 91). Although Pesequen was not defended by counsel, an indication that the trial was as fair and just as could be expected under the circumstances comes from Commissioner Perry's mild rebuke to the prosecutor, Mr. McKerchan, in the judge's charge to the jury (p. 114).

> Council for the Crown has been hampered in dealing with this case because of his desire to treat the accused fairly. The Crown Council, while performing his duty to the public, has endeavored to represent the prisoner's side, and you are able to judge how far he has succeeded in carrying out these duties.

Pesequen asked that someone speak for him, and Commissioner Perry appointed a Mr. C. Crompton Calverly, a representative of the Indian

Department, to act in this capacity. Mr. Calverly evidently made a good job of it, and almost persuaded the jury to reduce the charge from murder to manslaughter on the grounds of the mitigating circumstances of what we would today call cultural differences (pp. 114, 118). The jury finally returned a verdict of "guilty, with a strong recommendation for mercy on account of the prisoner's ignorance and superstition" (p. 118). Unfortunately Mr. Calverly's statement has not been preserved.

Our information on the Sandy Lake area windigo killings comes to us from the testimony of two young Indians who were detained along with the Fiddler brothers and held as witnesses. They were Norman "Owl" Rae, also known as Napoquanias, also known as Minowapawin, and Angus Rae, also known as Manwapait, and yet another undisclosed Indian name. We do not know what "deal," if any, was made with these men in exchange for their testimony. We do not know if they felt it was in their best interests to lie, or tell the truth, or artfully combine the two. Certainly their testimony at times seems evasive and equivocal; at other times almost impossibly naïve. But theirs is the best account of what really happens at a windigo execution that we are ever likely to get.

The facts, as related by Norman and Angus Rae, are rather prosaic and almost dull. Sometime around the first of September, 1906, an Indian woman, Wasakapeequay, also known as Mrs. Thomas Fiddler, was brought in to the encampment at Sandy Lake by her husband and her father-in-law, Pesequan. She was sick and would not lie quiet. She was very weak; too weak to have hurt anyone. Her speech was incoherent. She moaned and waved her arms. At first she rolled on the ground and people held her down. Later she was not held and appears to have grown weaker.

She was described as delirious by the witnesses. There was a "wigwam" at the encampment in which several families were residing, but she was not taken into it. The first night she was left outside and a shelter was erected to cover her. Her father-in-law and all his family camped near her outside the wigwam.

The following evening the woman was taken to a campfire a short distance away. Present were Chief Jack Fiddler (Misinawinenew), the accused Joseph Fiddler (Pesequan), witness Norman Rae, and John Rae. Witness Angus Rae left just before the execution. When Norman Rae arrived, Wasakapeequay was lying on a piece of cotton cloth that had been spread on the ground. Jack Fiddler drew up the end of the cloth and placed it around the woman's neck. A slip knot was tied in a length of line and Joseph and Jack Fiddler fixed it over her neck outside the cotton. They then told Norman and John Rae to hold the sick woman's arms. This they did. Wasakapeequay tried to move her arms, but apparently with no more vigor than she had been moving them all along. Jack Fiddler took one end of the line, and Joseph Fiddler took the other end. They pulled in opposite directions until the woman was dead. Sometime during the night or early the next morning the body was sewn up in the cotton cloth. Norman Rae, who worked part-time for the Hudson's Bay Company, was ordered to "take the body over to the Company's place and bury it there" (p. 95). He did this with the help of an unnamed boy.

Norman Rae testified that he did not know why the woman was strangled and in fact never heard anything about it until he saw the string around her neck (p. 96). On the other hand,he did not object to the execution and admitted that he had heard of others being put to death in the same way.

Q. Do you know why they do it?
A. They were scared that when they are sick they will turn out to be cannibals, man-eaters, and will destroy them. (p. 97)

Angus Rae remembers hearing the dead woman's husband, on the night before the execution, say that she would not live (p. 103). But neither witness reports fear or hysteria among any of the people present at the encampment. We have absolutely no reason to think that Mrs. Fiddler showed the slightest inclination to kill or eat anyone. This fact is not in dispute. There was no "windigo psychosis." The woman was delirious and weak; that is all.

We have the following testimony from Angus Rae (p. 104):

Q. — And you went out to where the campfire was?
A. — Yes.
Q. — Did you know why this woman was taken out to where this campfire was?
A. — No.
Q. — Did your wife tell you why she had been taken out there?
A. — No, she did not tell me.
Q. — Did you hear anyone say or give a reason for her having been taken out there?
A. — No.
Q. — Were the people in the wigwam talking at all when you were in there?
A. — No, they were talking in their own end.
Q. — Were they talking about this woman?
A. — They were talking, but not about this woman.
Q. — When you went out there where was the woman?
A. — When we went over there she was lying by the campfire. The prisoner was there and Jack.
Q. — And anyone else?
A. — Norman and John Rae.
Q. — Were any of them talking when you got out there?
A. — They were talking. Joseph and Jack had a string in their hands.
Q. — What did they say?
A. — They were saying that they were going to strangle her and put her out of her misery.
Q. — Who said that?
A. — Jack said it.
Q. — Who was Jack talking to when he said this?
A. — He was talking to his brother the prisoner and to John Rae.
Q. — Did the prisoner say anything?

A. — The prisoner says: It's all right.
Q. — Did John Fiddler, the chief, say anything else beyond that they were going to strangle her to put her out of her misery?
A. — No, he did not say anything else.

Later in his testimony (p. 109) Angus Rae repeats his statement that the reason why sick people are put to death is to put them out of their misery, and he knew of no other reason for doing so. But under prompting from the Crown Counsel, Angus Rae reversed himself and said that he had heard the Chief, the prisoner, and other men say that if a person died in a delirium he or she would turn into a cannibal.

It is difficult to know what to make of this after so many years. It is tempting to try to read too much into it, to make an interpretation unwarranted by the facts still available to us. This much seems clear: the cannibal rationale for the killing was not foremost in the minds of either Angus or Norman Rae, and from Angus' report it seems reasonable to assume that euthanasia was the main thing John and Joseph Fiddler set out to achieve. If the deed could also be rationalized, either before or after the fact, as an ounce of windigo prevention, then so much the better.

But once the execution occurred the process of windigo mythologization was almost inevitable. From the testimony of Angus Rae:

Q. — Do you know why the woman was put to death?
A. — My wife told me that the people were saying that the woman was going to turn into a cannibal. The people in the wigwam were saying this.
Q. — Was it before or after the death that your wife told you this?
A. — Two days after the death.
(pp. 106, 107; italics added)

By the time Hallowell did his fieldwork, about thirty years later, the mythologization process had moved inexorably along. "He was told by his

informants that Wasakapeequay could not eat and that she vomited everything. He was also told that she begged to be killed since she was firmly convinced that she was turning into a cannibal" (Teicher 1960:74; based on Hallowell's unpublished field notes).

The desire to put a hopelessly sick person out of his or her misery transcends cultural boundaries. Thomas Fiddler believed that his wife would not recover (p. 103). We do not know how long she had been ill. It could have been for some time. But in this case there were compelling contextual reasons for euthanasia. Until about thirty years ago, the Northern Ojibwa were simply not equipped to deal with a protracted illness, especially one that involved impaired mental function.

Consider the scene at Sandy Lake at the end of the summer, 1906. In those days Sandy Lake was only the site of a summer encampment. Soon the band would be splitting into small, family winter hunting groups. Collective survival depended on this seminomadic round of winter dispersal. Game and fish in the immediate areas of the large summer gatherings would be quickly depleted if the band remained stationary. It would not be long before it would be time to pack everyone and everythink into the birch-bark canoes and depart. The various families would be traveling many miles over lakes, rivers, and portages. Some of the smaller rapids would be run. What could be done with Wasakapeequay? Contrary to popular opinion, the most serious environmental hazard in the boreal forest is not the cold, but drowning (Marano 1981). A delirious or mentally impaired person cannot be taken on a canoe trip. A false move in a canoe will spell disaster. This woman was rolling on the ground and waving her arms around; an impossible situation. She

could even by chance get hold of an axe (commonly found lying loose in northern canoes) and chop a hole in the bottom of the craft.

Wasakapeequay could not be taken to winter camp, and she could not be abandoned at Sandy Lake. It was not expected that she would recover. Nature would be allowed to take its course, or the course of nature could be speeded along. The latter option was chosen. Does this "functional-ecological" explanation preclude or deny a belief in cannibal-monsters or spirit-possession among the Northern Ojibwa? Not at all. In any functional social system ideological beliefs are integrated with and intensify structural and infrastructural formations. It is hard to say exactly what the people camped at Sandy Lake believed about cannibal possession in September of 1906, but by their own best accounts they were not afraid of Mrs. Fiddler, and they wanted to put her out of her misery.

> Q. — Did you ever hear the chief give any reason for having people put to death who were sick?
> A. — When they are sick and so long in misery they put them out of their misery.
> Q. — Did you hear the chief say that? A. — Yes.
> Q. — You heard him? A. — Yes.
> Q. — What chief? A. — Jack.
> Q. — Give the exact words.
> A. — Jack said that when anyone was sick like that and is so miserable they might as well put them to an end.
> (p. 109)

In the course of Angus Rae's testimony, the Crown Counsel asked a question that prompted the young man to give information on three other windigo executions. "What does the Sucker band, to which you belong, do to anyone who is sick and cannot be cured?" (p. 107). In response Angus told of David Meekis, killed in 1902 or 1903 somewhere west of Favourable Lake by his brothers James and Joseph Meekis, Elias Rae, and

Joseph Fiddler. David Meekis was "very sick. . . . He was sitting up and making a big noise while he was breathing" (p. 108). He was delirious and moving, but did not seem dangerous to Angus Rae. His speech was unintelligible. He was alive when Angus Rae went to bed, and while Angus was sleeping he heard someone yelling and went out to see that David Meekis was dead and his body was being put on the fire.

David Meekis himself took part in the killing of another sick man perhaps fifteen years before his own execution. Since Angus Rae testified that this killing took place when he was very small, Teicher is probably correct in fixing the date as being somewhere in the 1880s (1960:63). Others involved were Lucas and Joseph Meekis and John Rae. The man killed was named Ahkamekeseecowiniew, and the event took place somewhere between the west end of Deer Lake, Ontario, and Little Grand Rapids, Manitoba. Again, Angus Rae did not witness the execution but saw the sick man before he was dispatched and then saw the body being burned (p. 108).

A little later Angus Rae spoke of the death of a man named Menewascum, also known as Pewabic (Metal). Sometime around September 20, 1906, Menewascum was brought into the encampment at Sandy Lake. He was delirious and his wife asked Chief Jack Fiddler to strangle him. "This woman was trying very hard for Jack to strangle the man. . . . She was talking to him all night and part of the next day" (pp. 111).

Angus Rae's account of his own role in the execution is rather implausible. The morning after the sick man was brought in, Angus went out with his nets. Apparently it was on his return to shore (although this is not clear from the testimony) that his brother came up to him

on the bank and told him to come up quickly, for they were going to strangle a man. Angus walked past the wigwam where the sick man was. He "had private work in the bush" and was joined by his brother, John Rae. As they returned to the wigwam Angus saw a piece of string coming out from it. John Rae told him to pull it. He did, and "only then I knew I had strangled a man. . . . I got frightened, as I only knew then I had done wrong. I had strangled a man." According to Angus, Jack Fiddler was pulling the other end of the line and he was accompanied inside the wigwam by his brother, Joseph Fiddler. Angus Rae and his brother helped to bury the man (p. 111).

To say the very least, it is hard to believe that Angus Rae had no idea of what he was doing as he pulled on the string, but he was not challenged on this by the court, nor does he seem to have been subsequently charged. He may have been promised some kind of immunity in exchange for his testimony. But I think it is significant that he, who had first-hand knolwedge of four windigo executions, does not mention any fear of the sick people among the Indians. Nowhere does he suggest that any of those killed had threatened murder or had shown the slightest desire to eat human flesh. Nowhere is there any evidence of psychosis.

We get a hint of what Menewascum's actual malady may have been from this 1907 entry from the Campbell diary:

> The present Chief of the Band at Deers Lake, Ont. is Robert Fiddler a son of Misinawinenew [Jack Fiddler]. During the summer while the two murderers were awaiting trial at Norway House, this son and a few of the young braves of the band visited the [Island Lake] Post, Robert Fiddler told me; that, "the old man did not do anything wrong in strangling the woman, and in the case of Menowescum (one of the Crane Indians) they had to burn him alive; he had dysentary for four days." (n.d.: 44-45)

Of course Angus Rae testified that Menewascum was strangled and buried, not burned alive. But I think it is interesting to note that in Campbell's account Robert Fiddler does not use incipient cannibalism or spirit-possession as a justification for the killing, but dysentary!

Further indication of an arrangement, or pretrial agreement between the Crown and Angus Rae comes from the fact that, although Angus Rae admits to have taken an active part in the strangulation of Menowascum, he does not appear to have been charged. Norman Rae, on the other hand, who played only a passive role in the Wasakapeequay execution, was listed as one of those indicted for murder in 1908.

> Rex vs. Norman Rae (Indian). Awaiting trial. Evidence in Fiddler case showed that he was implicated in a similar crime. Patrol is being sent to fetch further witnesses, and also to arrest brother of the accused [John Rae?] who, it appears, is equally implicated. (Perry 1908:2; italics in the original)

In February, 1908, Angus Rae accompanied Inspector E. A. Pelletier on his patrol from Norway House to Sandy Lake, where the Inspector found it necessary to warn the Suckers "that Angus was now a friend of ours and if they molested him in any way they would feel very sorry for it afterwards" (1909:161).

"Justifiable-homicide-on-the-grounds-we-were-about-to-be-eaten-by-a-monster" was quite a successful defense in the Moostoos trial, when one man received a sentence of only two months imprisonment. But no such case was made for Pesequan. He was found guilty and sentenced to be hanged. The strong recommendation for mercy that accompanied the jury's verdict was considered to be a matter for executive clemency by Commissioner Perry in imposing sentence (p. 118). The sentence was commuted, but the old man had less than two years to live. In June, 1908,

a group of Methodist missionaries, Hudson's Bay men, and others petitioned the Minister of Justice for Pesequan's pardon, stating that his actions were the result of his cultural beliefs rather than maliciousness. Some of the petitioners had visited him in prison and reported to the Minister that the old man's health was too poor for him to survive prison life much longer (PAC 1907-08). The pardon was not granted, and Pesequan, also known as Joseph Fiddler, died "of consumption" in the penitentiary hospital on September 1, 1909 (PAC 1907-09).

The Ahwahsahkahmig Case

Two months before Moostoos met his death more than 1,000 miles to the westward, a strange incident occurred at Cat Lake, now in the province of Ontario about 60 miles south of Round Lake and about 100 miles southeast of Sandy Lake. As of this writing there is no trial report available for this case, but there are extensive sworn statements (of witnesses) taken at Police Headquarters in Winnipeg on October 28, 1899 (Manitoba Court of Queen's Bench 1899). The statements are remarkably consistent. The facts as they can be pieced together from the statements are as follows.

About June 10, 1899, a Mr. Andrew R. J. Bannatyne, school teacher and Indian agent at Lac Seul, Ontario, was approached by a man named Umbash, who had information to relate concerning the death of his brother. (The name is now represented as Ombash in Cat Lake and Round Lake. Lac Seul is about ninety miles south of Cat Lake. The term "brother" in Ojibwa includes not only relatives we would classify as "brother" in English kin terminology, but means "male parallel of my generation.") As a consequence of this conversation, Bannatyne wrote

to a Mr. Leveque, who was presumably a government official of some kind.

In response to Bannatyne's letter, a Constable R. G. Chamberlin was sent out from Ottawa, and arrived at Lac Seul on the morning of October 6, 1899, with a warrant for the arrest of one Tooshenaun and accomplices. Bannatyne, who spoke Ojibwa, and Chamberlin set out for Cat Lake, arriving there on the evening of October 14. Bannatyne and Chamberlin went to the house of Mr. A_____t (the name is illegible), the Hudson's Bay Company manager, who also spoke Ojibwa. Tooshenaun and a number of other Indians were sent for. Umbash, the brother of the deceased, was also present (MCQB 1899:1-2).

Bannatyne told Tooshenaun that he had heard certain reports concerning the demise of their late chief, and wanted to get Tooshenaun's version of the matter. Tooshenaun made a statement then, and again later in Winnipeg. Ahneokeesik, who was also involved in the execution, made a statement in Winnipeg. An Indian named Jimmy who was a witness to the killing also made a statement in Winnipeg which became a part of the police record. There is no disagreement or serious inconsistencies in any of the statements.

On a morning in "the big winter month" (January?), 1899, Ahwahsahkahmig, the chief of the Cat Lake band, invited several men into his tent. Among them were Tooshenaun, Ahneokeesik, Metahpawitch, and Kakenapenase. The chief gave his guests something to eat and drink. After breakfast the chief told the four men not to go away for there was something he wanted them to do. Ahwahsahkahmig said that he knew he was to become a windigo and it was necessary for them to kill him. Should the men fail to do as he asked, he would wipe out the whole band. He had

become possessed by a spirit devil and if he were not killed in time he would become invulnerable. The whole day was spent in talking to the men, trying to persuade them to shoot him. He asked at least "ten times" and "begged so hard that we were in tears." Finally, late in the afternoon, the men consented to do as he wished (MCQB 1899:3-4, 12).

The chief appointed Tooshenaun and Ahneokeesik to shoot him, Kakenapenase to stand by with an axe, and Metahpawitch to set fire to the body. Ahwahsahkahmig was quite explicit about the fact that should any portion of his body be left unburned he would be capable of rising again in the shape of a spirit. The chief distributed most of his belongings among the band. He then made a bed of boughs in the wigwam, spread his rabbit skin robe on top of it, and lay down on his back. Tooshenaun reported that "it was great pain that I undertook the job," and apparently showed reluctance. The chief said, "No matter, take your guns." Before leaving to get and load his gun Tooshenaun shook hands with Ahwahsahkahmig. Even from outside the tent the men could hear the chief calling to them to hurry up and do as he wished. When the men reentered the tent Ahwahsahkahmig raised his right arm and pointed to the spot where the executioners were to shoot. Tooshenaun fired first, followed almost immediately by Ahneokeesik. The man died at once. Wood was piled on the tent and a fire was kept going for two nights (MCQB 1899:4-5, 12).

Assuming the facts as related are correct, how can they best be analyzed? First, there was no cannibalism and no evidence of insanity unless one wishes to defend the position that all suicides in all cultures are evidence of mental instability. It is true that one of the

witnesses reported that the chief had been "acting strangely for some days," but this is not surprising under the circumstances of the suicide, nor is it evidence for a culture-specific cannibalistic psychosis. From an etic/behavioral perspective Ahwahsahkahmig showed no evidence of mental illness. It is also possible that the attribution of "strange behavior" was an ex post facto addendum. He may have been sick or depressed for any number of reasons.

The Ahwahsahkahmig case provides good evidence for windigo belief, but it is not windigo belief that is being challenged in this dissertation, rather windigo cannibalistic behavior. And we have here one important fly in the ointment in the universal acceptance of windigo possession in Northern Algonkian belief as a rationale for homicide: the actions of the deceased's brother, Umbash. My opinion is that Umbash did not approve of the killing of his brother. I believe it to be unlikely that he made the long trip to Lac Seul for other reasons, and mentioned the execution to Mr. Bannatyne in passing. I believe that he made the trip specifically to report the matter to the Indian agent, knowing full well that the official would take some action. There is at least one other side to the story of Ahwahsahkahmig's execution, but it may now be irretrievably lost.

Mapanin: A Disconfirming Case

There is one windigo execution on record that might have been witnessed by white men. The etic inputs in the Mapanin case tend to disconfirm the thesis defended in this dissertation, and support conventional analyses of the windigo phenomenon. For reasons that are not yet clear, the Mapanin case was never investigated by the RNWMP despite the

fact that the Mounties received reports of the execution and preliminary steps were taken to investigate. Were the records of the investigation lost, or was the investigation called off? This question must be answered by further research. What little I do have on the case comes from an unpaginated file in the Public Archives of Canada (1896).

A dramatic piece of evidence in this file is the "Copy of the Journal kept by Francis Beatten, or Beaton [the man's name was Francis W. Beatton], in charge of the Hudson's Bay Company's Store at Trout Lake, taken by the bearer George Holmes of Lesser Slave Lake" (PAC 1896). Trout Lake in question is located "about 70 miles from Lesser Slave Lake in an easterly direction" (PAC 1896). From a letter he wrote asking for clemency for Moostoos' executioners, we learn that the Reverend George Holmes was superintendent of Protestant missions for the Peace River district (PAC 1899). It is never clear in this account who the person speaking is. It is supposed to be a copy of Beatton's journal, but "Francis" is often referred to in the third person and the paper is signed Geo Holmes. (The victim's Christian name was also Francis, but it is clear that the references are to Beatton.)

The narrative runs two single-spaced typewritten pages and reads like an H. P. Lovecraft horror tale. It is the story of a man named Mapanin, who arrived at Trout Lake from Wabasca Lake on January 3, 1896, and "seemed to be crazy." He had had a vision the night before in which "the devil" appeared to him and told him to eat his children. He believed that someone had put a curse on him. Other entries dated January 12, 15, 19, and 20 attest to the sick man's progressive physical and psychological deterioration. The white man (men?) tried to help him with prayers and doses of castor oil, but to no avail.

The man said his heart was freezing, he become "terribly swollen on the body and face," and he repeatedly implored the others to kill him before he murdered and ate them. The Indians were terribly frightened. On January 21, 1896, the white men went to visit Mapanin and brought some cod lines to tie him with. The sick man was "calling like a wild bull." He was tied and (Holmes?) left to fetch stronger ropes. He returned about two in the morning to find the lines breaking on Mapanin's arms.

The Indians asked (Holmes?/Beatton?) what to do, and he told them, "if they were going to do anything to do it, as [he] had no more lines to tie him with." The father of the sick man then said that "he saw they could do nothing for his son, [the sick man] was getting worse all the time, and [Mapanin] was too strong for them," but he concluded, "I do not want to see them kill him." A medicine man asked [Holmes?/Beatton?) to perform the execution, but he refused. He was asked again, once more declined, and told the shaman to do it himself.

> He then took the axe, I went to the door, I now knowing how it was, seemed terribly frightened [sic], I came back again, he had already struck him on the head once with the axe. He struck him again and the man was going to rise. Yakwemoo [the medicine man] said he would get up, that he could not kill him, I told him to try, and put him out of his suffering [sic]. He hit him again and the man did not move. (PAC 1896)

And so died Mapanin, also known as Francis Auger, son of Baptiste Auger. When Emile Grouard, the Roman Catholic bishop, arrived at Trout Lake on January 25, he found "all the people in a state of consternation . . . [and] all the houses deserted, even the Fort, and all men, and children were packed up in two small houses" (PAC 1896).

"Even the Fort" was deserted? It sounds as if Beatton had abandoned the HBC post and was packed up in one of the two small houses with the others. What kind of man was this Beatton? I got the impression that he was just as "spooked" by the whole affair as the Indians were. In a letter from Hudson's Bay Company Archivist Alex Ross (personal communication 1981) I learned that

> According to the Abstract of Servants Accounts for the Outfit of 1896-1897, Francis W. Beatton was a labourer with the Hudson's Bay Company in the Peace River District. Mr. Beatton had been in the Company's service for fourteen years. (HBC Archives D. 33/3, fo. 12)

To me the fact that Beatton was still listed as a "labourer" after fourteen years' company service is an indication of one of two possibilities. The first is that he was a white man of low rank and hence of little education. Hudson's Bay Company officer and author James Hargrave wrote in 1840 to a British acquaintance advising her

> strongly against having her son enter the firm as a "common labourer" while he might, if patient enough to let his name stand awhile on a waiting list, attain a clerkship. As a labourer, he would be "descending to the same rank as the most uneducated of our people . . . in short lose caste and descend from the respectable rank in which he has been brought up to a level with the lowest of the peasantry." (Brown 1980:205)

The second possibility is that his lack of advancement was an indication that he was of mixed native and European ancestry (Brown 1980:295-211), in which case he would have learned windigo lore at his mother's knee, and from his maternal relations. "Beaton [sic] is the man who can give the best evidence in the case," wrote Bishop Grouard, "and if the Police are to take the matter upon their hands, they must first hear him" (PAC 1896).

But nothing on the record was heard from Beatton. On February 20, 1896, B. B. Lariviere, the Justice of the Peace at Lesser Slave Lake, wrote to Northwest Mounted Police Inspector Synder at Edmonton:

> Sir,
> In connection with tragedy of which I have informed you, and on occasion of your sending the Police, I wish you to send up with your men six, or seven pair of hand-cuffs, as about seven men are implicated and will have to be put under close arrest. I also wish that your men would come in civilian clothes, as I am afraid the Indians will run away, on seeing your men in uniform, and it will cause needless trouble. (PAC 1896)

The incident was also reported by Charles R. Weaver, the Anglican missionary in charge at Wapuskow (PAC 1896). The matter was referred to Supt. A. H. Griesbach, then commanding at Fort Saskatchewan, who waited for a full report from Mr. Lariviere. But no report was ever received from Lariviere because he "died at Slave Lake shortly after saying he would send a report down" (PAC 1896). Correspondence on the matter went back and forth for over two years when Inspector (Snyder?) wrote:

> The men who killed the Indian are still, I believe, living at Trout Lake, but the incident has been nearly forgotten by the residents of that section of the country. (PAC 1896)

As far as can be ascertained, this is one case in which the Mounties failed to "get their man." It appears that the incident was quietly dropped. This was the period when the Force was preoccupied with the celebrated "Charcoal" and "Almighty Voice" cases. These manhunts involved police fatalities, and they rank in RCMP history something like Tarawa and Iwo Jima do in USMC history.[2]

What was wrong with Mapanin? In addition to (or in conjunction with) any psychiatric problems he may have had, I believe he had an organic disorder. The only clue as to what this might have been is the statement that he was "terribly swollen on the body and face" (PAC 1896).

Moostoos too had shown edema in the legs (ECF 1899:8-9). The delirium in combination with the swelling leads me to believe that these men were suffering from kidney failure. I have seen a case of delirium from kidney failure in an urban hospital, and it is terrible to behold. It frightened me even though the victim was a stranger to me, and I understood what was causing the symptoms. It is easy to understand how a group of people off in the bush would have become unnerved by exposure to a case like this, and used an element of their cultural belief system to justify triage homicide.

Notes

[1]Metis are Canadians of mixed European and Indian descent and culture, who have existed as a distinct ethnic entity since the 18th century, and have figured prominently in Canadian history since that time. Many contemporary Metis speak English or French and an Indian language, but some are monolingual in either a native language (usually Cree or Ojibwa) or a European language (usually English). Today the term has largely come to mean a native person who does not appear on government treaty lists. Of all the jurisdictions in Canada, only Alberta has official guidelines that attempt to operationalize the category. Anyone for whom at least one quarter Indian ancestry can be demonstrated is officially considered a Metis in that province. For background see Adams (1975) and Brown (1980).

[2]Charcoal was a Blood Indian suffering from tuberculosis who, on September 30, 1896, at a place southwest of Lethbridge, Alberta, shot and killed his wife's paramour while the couple was in flagrante delicto. On several occasions Charcoal had warned the young man to stop the affair, the last time only moments before the killing, but he was mocked by the lothario. There is reason to believe that the homicide was motivated less by sexual jealousy than by the fact that his wife was involved with her own cousin, making the affair an incestuous one (Dempsey 1978:18-20).

According to Dempsey, Charcoal firmly believed he would be hanged for the killing, and decided that it was necessary for a prominent person—Indian or white—to precede him in death to "ensure him a satisfactory entry into the spirit world" (1978:34). Accordingly, he soon thereafter attempted to kill Edward McNeil, a farm instructor, by shooting into his home, but only succeeded in wounding him (1978: 39).

Charcoal went on the run, and was aided from time to time by his brothers Left Hand and Bear Back Bone, who gave him food and weapons. The Mounted Police responded by arresting his brothers (Bear Back Bone was in an advanced state of tuberculosis and had less than a year to live.) Also arrested were the wives, children, and other relatives of Charcoal's brothers. Some of the children were sickly babies who could not realistically be expected to survive 19th-century prison life.

In early November, Charcoal tried to ambush Corporal Armer at the Mounted Police barracks in Cardston, but he fired in darkness and only grazed Armer's arm. On November 10, Charcoal was overtaken by Sergeant W. B. Wilde, who was riding ahead of his Indian scouts. Sergeant Wilde attempted to take Charcoal alive, but Charcoal shot and killed Wilde, and took the policeman's horse and rifle.

Even though Charcoal's brother's babies were dying in prison, Mounted Police Major Samuel B. Steele refused to release them and twenty-four others the police were holding without charge. In order to save his infant son's life, Left Hand agreed to help capture his brother. Bear Back Bone agreed to do the same in return for leniency for his son who was in jail awaiting trial on a cattle stealing charge.

Early on the morning of November 11, 1896, Charcoal sought help from his brothers and was subdued by them. While waiting for the arrival of the police, he attempted suicide by surreptitiously puncturing the veins in his arm with an awl, but was discovered and his wounds were bound. Charcoal was tried for murder and found guilty. He was hanged on March 16, 1897. The manhunt for Charcoal was one of the biggest in the history of the Northwest Mounted Police. Charcoal outwitted his pursuers at every turn and was ultimately captured by his brothers (Dempsey 1978). But at the same time the force was engaged in the hunt for Charcoal, the case of Almighty Voice presented the police with an even larger challenge.

Almighty Voice was a Cree who was arrested in October 1895 for killing a cow for a wedding feast. He was jailed at Duck Lake, Saskatchewan. Tradition in western Canada has it that he was teased by one of his jailers who assured him that he would hang for the offense. Almighty Voice took the matter seriously, and escaped from the guard house. When police Sergeant C. C. Colebrook tried to recapture him a few days later, Almighty Voice killed the policeman and took his horse and revolver (Dempsey 1978:42).

"Almighty Voice managed to elude the police for a year and a half with the help of other members of his tribe, a fact the police considered the most disturbing aspect of the case. The incident showed signs of developing into a third western Canadian rebellion (McLeod 1976:118)."

In May, 1897, Almighty Voice was cornered in a grove of trees with two followers. The police and local civilians unwisely tried to rush

the Indians' position, resulting in the deaths of a Mountie and a postmaster, and the wounding of four others. Field artillery was finally called in and the three Indians were killed in the protracted bombardment. It is easy to see why, with all this going on in the northwest, the Mapanin incident was given such a low priority.

CHAPTER V
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This chapter summarizes the arguments presented in the dissertation. Conclusions are also drawn that aspire to be nomothetic contributions toward a uniformitarian social science.

In Chapter I, I argued that an emic/mentalist bias limited the abilities of anthropologists adequately to analyze the Algonkian windigo complex. As expressed most explicitly by Hallowell, a distinguished student of Ojibwa culture, all we need to know about certain puzzling situations is what these situations mean to the Ojibwa themselves. Once we understand the native's point of view, writes Hallowell, these situations are "as humanly intelligible to us as [they are] to the Ojibwa" (1955:177).

Of course, anthropologists must take pains to understand the cultural continuities of the people we study, but an emphasis on the emics of mental life is insufficient in two important ways. In the first place this approach ignores or minimizes diversity <u>within</u> cultures. This is especially important in the study of stratified societies, but it is also crucial in the study of egalitarian societies where certain individuals are singled out for persecution and death. Secondly, this approach typically fails to distinguish between the emics of thought from the etics of behavior. Even if there were unanimous consensus within a society as to values, goals, and events,

this consensus does not necessarily conform to an empirical and intersubjectively verifiable analysis of the same. The thesis of the present work is that "windigo psychosis" is an artifact of the failure to distinguish the emics of thought from the etics of behavior. This shortcoming has resulted in a double error, for the windigo of anthropological reknown conforms neither to the emic phenomenological category of the Northern Algonkians nor to their etic behavioral history.

I contend that the windigo phenomenon must be understood in terms of group sociodynamics rather than from individual psychodynamics. From this point of view we must try to understand the evolution of witch-fear, and why certain individuals have been singled out by their societies as having been bewitched, or possessed by the spirit of a cannibal-monster, and very often killed. The conclusion reached is that an important element of the Northern Algonkian windigo complex has been a witch-fear that shows general similarities to the witch-fear typically found in other highly stressed societies. Specifically, the accusation of cannibal-possession was determined by the uncertainty of the food resource base during the fur-trade period; a situation in which famine cannibalism periodically became the only alternative to starvation. In an environmental context that allowed for a very slim margin for error, it became impossible to nurse the critically or chronically ill. In this way elements of the Algonkian windigo myth came to be used as a rationale for triage homicide, especially when the victim was suffering greatly, or in a delirium.

Chapter II reviews the voluminous literature on windigo with the assumption that for almost fifty years, anthropologists have been

asking the wrong question with regard to the windigo phenomenon. Rather than asking the question, "what causes a person to become a cannibalistic maniac?" we should address ourselves to the question "under what circumstances is a Northern Algonkian likely to be accused of having become a cannibalistic maniac and thus run the risk of being executed as such?" My reading of the literature agrees with John J. Honigmann's, who, after eliminating the instances of famine cannibalism, reported: "I can't find one [case] that satisfactorily attests to someone being seriously obsessed by the idea of committing cannibalism" (1967:401). This conclusion of Honigmann's has been supported by my five years of intimate association with the Northern Ojibwa, and my study of the archival windigo case materials.

We have seen that of the more than 70 cases of "windigo psychosis" reported in the literature, only one was observed by the reporter (Saindon 1928, 1933), and this woman was neither cannibalistic nor psychotic. I have argued that the "psychosis" was a creation of Father John M. Cooper (1933) whose interpretation of this aspect of Northern Algonkian culture was followed over-hastily by A. Irving Hallowell (1934) and Ruth Landes (1937a,b; 1938a,b). These fieldworkers accepted informants' stories at face value, and never questioned the accuracy of accounts of cannibalistic obsession, or of reputed requests by the victims to be killed. The ramifications of Landes' salutary observation--"All [Ojibwa] insanities are generically termed windigo" (1937a:46)--have been apparently overlooked by anthropologists, no less by Landes herself than by others.

Having so unreliable a data base, it is small wonder that Seymour Parker's (1960) neo-Freudian "mean-mommy" analysis of the etiology of "windigo psychosis" has not aged well. Morton Teicher's unsupported assertion that cannibalistic behavior is inevitable once the windigo label has been applied to a person "regardless of the ailment he may actually have" (1960:109), is another analysis that appears weak after two decades. As I remarked in an earlier paper (Marano 1979:8), "A person in a delirium from advanced tuberculosis, cancer of the liver, or kidney failure is in no condition to kill or eat anyone, even if--by some remote chance--he or she should feel so inclined."

Several of Raymond Fogelson's (1965) contributions continue to enhance our knowledge of the windigo complex, although I have questioned the utility of his "N-U-P model." On the other hand, Bolman and Katz's unfortunate (1966) attempt to link their "Hamburger Hoarder" to any aspect of Northern Algonkian ethnology does a disservice to both their patient and the Indians in question.

In my opinion, the controversy surrounding Vivian Rohrl's (1970) suggestion that "windigo psychosis" is a nutritional deficiency disease curable by an ingestion of bear fat has not significantly advanced the debate. It is, however, a benign diversion compared to Thomas Hay's (1971) assertion that "windigo psychosis" is the Northern Algonkian manifestation of a "cannibalistic impulse" they are somehow unable to discharge through symbolic activities.

J. Anthony Paredes' (1972) paper stands as a challenge to Teicher's (1960:13) contention that "belief stands in respect to behavior as does cause to effect," because his informant, the "normal windigo," believed

in the Windigo giant, and dreamed she was being chased by him, and yet remained normal. This paper also calls Fogelson's (1965) "N-U-P" model into question, since Mrs. F. passes through the "Normal" and "Upset" stages of windigo immersion, yet never becomes psychotic, nor does she report having thoughts of cannibalism.

Next reviewed were three recent papers that have made important contributions to the windigo question by showing consistent critical skepticism in their analysis. Charles Bishop (1975) documents the fact that reports of windigo cannibalism, and a cultural preoccupation with the fear of windigo monsters, is positively correlated with environmental degradation and the development of a trade monopoly unfavorable to the Northern Algonkians in the 19th century. Robin Ridington (1976) questions the diagnosis of "psychosis" with respect to the windigo complex, and shows that the religion of the Athapaskan Dunne-za of the boreal forest is not as different from that of the Northern Algonkians as has been thought. Ridington suggests that what might account for the peculiar configuration of cannibal witch-fear among the Northern Algonkians when compared to the Northern Athapaskans is the "longer period of disruptive influence from contact with Europeans" among the former (1976:126). And Richard J. Preston (1980) has followed up on the ideas of his late professor John J. Honigmann (1967) and the lessons of his own fieldwork (1975), to argue that the windigo of anthropology "is not a very adequate approximation to the Algonkian emotional dynamics or to the great variability in Algonkian and oral tradition on this topic" (1980:128).

But there are still those who hold out for the etic/behavioral existence of a culture-specific, cannibalistic psychopathology. James G. E. Smith (1976), for example, believes that windigo "psychosis" was aboriginal, and that it was found in historic times amid conditions of abundant game (1976:22). In Chapter II, I have argued that the 1741 passage from the HBC Archives Smith cites in support of his position is open to alternative interpretations.

Two papers attempting to deal with the Algonkian windigo complex by means of the structuralist paradigm serve to illustrate the widely divergent ways in which that research tradition can be used to explicate the same phenomenon. David H. Turner (1977) believes that the free and liberal way in which the Cree incorporate individuals into their social groupings is symbolically analogous to incorporating individuals by eating them. This "structure," Turner holds, can be identified through the study of windigo myths. Harold Franklin McGee, on the other hand, performed a structural analysis of a windigo myth and concluded that it "functioned to define the concept of human personness for the northeastern Algonkians" (1975:113), a determination I believe has far more value than Turner's.

Chapter III presents an overview of Northern Algonkian history since the 17th century, and documents the disruptions and depletions that I believe led to the genesis of the windigo witch-fear complex. It is argued that the belief system probably first evolved among the Cree. After 1670 the Cree were enticed into a precarious year-round existence in the vicinity of the Hudson's Bay Company posts, in barren coastal regions archaeologists tell us were probably uninhabited in

pre-Columbian times (Dawson 1981). In all likelihood the complex diffused to the inland Ojibwa after 1821, a time when starvation became a serious problem for these Indians because of the virtual extinction of the moose, severe depletion of the woodland caribou, and intermittent scarcity of beaver. It was in 1821 that the Hudson's Bay Company absorbed the Northwest Company, thereby eliminating competition from the fur trade, much to the detriment of the Northern Algonkians.

These novel developments resulted in a shift in mode of production and mode of reproduction in most Northern Algonkian groups. By necessity the Indians turned away from the pursuit of large game to the exploitation of fish, hare, grouse, other small game, and to furs for trade. This mode of production put a premium on the labor of children, and Northern Algonkian populations rose throughout the 19th century in the face of a severely diminished food supply and periodic epidemics of European diseases.

The burgeoning population put an even greater strain on the resource base. A situation arose where the labor of every capable person had to be employed in the food quest (Bishop 1978:225). The other side of this coin was that the existence of every incapable person imposed a severe tax on the domestic economy. It did not matter if the person was rendered incapable through disease, senility, or psychological dysfunction; the result was the same. The existence of such individuals in the social unit brought everyone that much closer to starvation, and the specter of famine cannibalism would materialize as a real possibility. It is my opinion that the modal anxieties of the group were focused and projected onto the

incapacitated individual who was adjudged "possessed" by the spirit of the windigo cannibal monster, thus legitimizing that person's execution.

The humanitarian motive for euthanasia should not be totally excluded, and was, I believe, also sometimes a consideration in a "windigo" execution. The Sandy Lake area cases explicated in Chapter IV indicate that when a seriously ill person was not expected to recover, they were put out of their misery. This motivation for homicide transcends cultural boundaries.

In Chapter III, an argument is presented that, in the 19th century, many of the boreal forest Algonkians found themselves in such straitened circumstances that they were eager to leave the Shield Subarctic and, beginning about 1830, did so whenever the opportunity arose. For the Cree of the Cumberland House, Norway House, and Nelson River districts, this usually meant emigration to join relatives at or near the Red River settlement. But for the more isolated Cree and Ojibwa to the northeast of Lake Winnipeg, there were few opportunities to improve their condition. They had no kin ties with the more acculturated Algonkians at Red River, and the Hudson's Bay Company--unwilling to lose its source of cheap native labor--opposed all attempts at Indian relocation.

Missionaries had been periodically challenging the HBC policy since at least 1822, but the most determined missionary to take up the cause of native relocation was Frederick George Stevens. Stevens was posted to Oxford House in 1897. According to his reports, the Indians in that district, as well as at God's Lake and Island Lake,

were living a miserable existence with endemic malnutrition and periodic food shortages. Worse yet was the condition of the Sandy Lake Ojibwa to the east, who, in the winter of 1899-1900 lost twenty-one people (out of about 200) to starvation. It was from these same Sandy Lake Ojibwa that four of Teicher's (1960) seventy windigo cases are drawn, and these cases occurred ca. 1835-1906. Stevens tried valiantly to get the Canadian government and the Methodist Church to underwrite a relocation plan, but ultimately failed.

Stevens was not an impartial observer, but I believe him to be a generally reliable one. When his report of the Sandy Lake starvation deaths was challenged in southern Manitoba, he and his wife and small child traveled by canoe to Sandy Lake, undergoing great hardship, to bring back witnesses. The witnesses swore to seeing fourteen starvation deaths. Another family of seven had simply disappeared, bringing the total to twenty-one. It is hard to ask for better verification of a claim than this.

Chapter IV synthesizes and analyzes windigo materials found in legal archives case by case. Two of these cases--those involving Ahwahsahkahmig and Mapanin--are my discoveries (with the assistance of helpful archivists [see Chapter I]) and have not been previously reported. The remainder, which constitute six out of Teicher's (1960) compendium of seventy windigo cases, are reexamined in the light of new materials recovered from the archives and my protracted and intense interaction with the Northern Ojibwa.

If my interpretations are correct, the most dramatic regularity in these cases is the complete absence of psychotic cannibalism. In

only the case of Swift Runner is there any cannibalism at all. There is no doubt that Swift Runner's family was in a starving condition. Everyone seems to agree that his eldest son died of starvation. What challenges my interpretation of famine cannibalism are the statements by Swift Runner's father-in-law, and the magistrate who presided at his trial, that Swift Runner and his family were never so far away from sources of aid that they could not have come in for help. Militating against these statements is the disappearance of Swift Runner's brother and mother. There is no reason to assume they met with foul play, yet they seem to have vanished from the face of the earth. In my opinion they tried to do what Kisickoway and Magistrate Richardson claimed was so easy to do, and failed. I believe that Swift Runner killed and ate the members of his family to save his own life, and not because he was obsessed by a psychotic compulsion to eat human flesh.

The Swift Runner tragedy took place in 1878-79 north of Edmonton. Two other archival cases presented in Chapter IV occurred in the same general area of what is now northern Alberta. Mapanin (Francis Auger) was executed as a windigo at a place about seventy miles east of Lesser Slave Lake in January 1896 and Moostoos (Louis, or Louison) was executed as a windigo perhaps sixty to seventy-five miles west of Lesser Slave Lake in March 1899. Together these two Alberta cases present an interesting contrast with the pattern shown in the remaining five cases, which took place in what is now northern Ontario.

In reading the documents concerning the executions of Moostoos and Mapanin, the most striking feature is the stark terror and panic

that siezed the people involved in, or witnesses to, the killings. One might almost say that these windigo-slayers in northern Alberta were gripped by a collective hysteria.

The picture in northern Ontario, however, is very different. In the four Sandy Lake area cases, the "windigos" were dispatched because they were "sick." There was no indication of the slightest fear of the sick people, and for Wasakapeequay (Mrs. Thomas Fiddler), the best documented windigo case on record, it was made quite explicit that the reason why she was killed was to put her out of her misery. There is even a strong indication that the windigo-possession rationale for the homicide may not have been invoked until two days after her death.

If the reports are correct in the puzzling case of Ahwahsahkahmig, the executed man quietly and calmly asked his friends to put him to death, and had to plead with them for an entire day before they agreed to do so. On the other hand, the deceased's brother took the trouble to travel 100 miles or so to report the matter to a government official. It is my opinion that he did so with the expectation that legal action would be taken. This aspect of the case indicates to me that there is more in it than meets the eye. Perhaps Ahwahsahkahmig was not as eager to die as his executioners indicate, or perhaps the dead man's brother believed that the killers took unfair advantage of Ahwahsahkahmig's despondency. But this case too fits the pattern of the others in northern Ontario. There is no panic, and no fear, and no mutilation of the body. There is just quiet, deliberate, and what appear to be reluctant executions performed as humanely as possible.

Unfortunately, I can do little more than identify the existence of these two patterns in windigo executions. I cannot offer a cogent explanation for the differences. Descriptively I can say that the Ontario cases occurred among Northern Ojibwa populations (the Sandy Lakers and Cat Lakers speak different dialects of Ojibwa). The people involved (especially the Sandy Lakers) had been relatively isolated from contact with Europeans for most of the 19th century, and missionary influence was slight to nil. The northern Alberta cases occurred among the western Woods Cree whose contact with Europeans seems to have been significantly greater than the Ojibwa of northern Ontario. Many or most of the Indians involved appear to have been at least nominal Christians and, according to reports of the Mapanin case, the Christian devil figures prominently in the etiology of his illness.

I believe that the emergence of cultural patterns is not capricious, but probabilistically determined by circumstances that can be observed and measured by the scientific community (cf. Harris 1968, 1979). In Chapters II and III, I argued that windigo witch-fear probably emerged (or was elaborated) among the Northern Algonkians during the fur-trade epoch, but the origins of the configuration remain obscure. Fortunately, the de novo appearance of other witch-fear complexes have been observed, and documented in the literature.

While every culture history--like every life history--is unique, recurrent patterns can be identified and it is the business of social science to make generalizations based on those patterns. A generalization we can make with some confidence is that witch-fear (as differentiated from shamanism) is characteristic of traumatized societies. In

his classic monograph Navaho Witchcraft, Clyde Kluckhohn showed that Navaho witch-fear and executions were the consequences of a devastating military defeat followed by mass incarceration at Fort Sumner "the full calamity of which it is difficult to convey to white readers" (1944:64).

> During the post-Fort Sumner period, the chiefs in power took care of advocates of renewed resistance to whites by spreading the word that these people were witches. Many were killed. There seems evidence that a correlation exists between the amount of fear and talk about witches and the general state of tension prevailing among the Navaho. Thus, during the last difficult years of controversy over the stock reduction program [beginning in 1933 and continuing through the New Deal years] there has been appreciably more witchcraft excitement than for sometime past. (1944:68)

Kluckhohn concludes his monograph by reprinting a 1942 New Mexico newspaper account of a particularly gruesome triple murder and suicide that was the result of Navaho witch-fear (1944:142).

In a brilliant and virtually neglected paper, "Witch-Fear in Post-Contact Kaska Society" (1947), John Honigmann documents the wave of torture, maimings, and killings that swept over the Kaska from about 1897 until suppressed by the RCMP and the British Columbia Provincial Police in the mid-1920s. Most of the victims were children, many of whom were persecuted by their closest relatives. Honigmann attributes the outbreak to the development of a situation in which "the Kaska found their survival imperiled" (1947:236). This resulted from "the influx of strangers [who] had upset the balance of the game" (1947:236), the introduction of new illnesses, and an increased dependence on trapping, the trading post, and non-native foods (1947: 236).

Edmond Carpenter has demonstrated how the introduction of deadly diseases, the decimation of game herds, an economy based more and more on an uncertain fox-fur trade, and competition with hostile Inuit groups for women and an ever-decreasing food supply, caused the Avilik Inuit to become preoccupied by witch-fear (1961 [1953]:509). By 1950 the aboriginal pattern of magic for controlling game, disease, weather, etc., had been almost completely replaced by the constant fear of malevolent witchcraft where "every man's hand was suspected of being against every nonrelative" (1961:508).

Shirley Lindenbaum has shown in her book Kuru Sorcery (1979) how the mounting importance of sorcery in the ideology of the South Fore of New Guinea "simultaneously registered and aggravated the social inequalities and demographic imbalances" occurring in their area in the 1950s and 1960s (1979:viii). "Between 1957 and 1968. over 1,100 kuru deaths occurred in a South Fore population of 8,000. . . . Since kuru is primarily a disease of adult women--the child-bearers, hog tenders, and gardeners--its effects on Fore society have been particularly deranging. When the incidence of kuru reached a peak, in the 1960s, the South Fore believed their society was coming to an end" (1979:6). "To this day, Fore universally believe that kuru is caused by malicious sorcerers in their midst" (1979:28).

The ethnographic record indicates that the ideology of sorcery among the Fore became elaborated in a brief period between 1951 and the 1960s (1979:74). This situation is complicated by novel social relations that resulted from three decades of exposure to Australian authorities. "A new way of life gave rise to greater manipulation of

the environment, and to differences in rank requiring the coercion of others in order to maintain an elevated position" (1979:7). The ubiquitous sorcerers, then, are considered by the superordinate to be those who "might willfully use their private technology to up-end the social order" (1979:143). Fore Big Men "seek to discredit political rivals both in their own community and in a more general sense" by accusing them of sorcery and calling them "rubbish men" (1979:126).

> In a masterly illusion projected by an egalitarian ethic, the dispossessed are characterized as a threat, a causistic line of argument we share with the Fore. People in marginal positions are portrayed as a danger to the establishment. If kuru becomes the prototype for studies of slow virus infections, Fore beliefs about mystical danger may contribute to our understanding of the emergence of social inequality. (1979:146)[1]

In Cows, Pigs, Wars and Witches, Marvin Harris (1974) charts the emergence of witch mania in a society that was already highly stratified. Harris has shown that in the year 1000 A.D. ecclesiastical and social authorities proscribed the belief that witches could ride through the air, and little importance was placed on the identification and destruction of "witches." Yet "after 1480, it was forbidden to believe that [the ride of the witches] did not take place" (1974: 184), and for over 200 years European "witches" were tortured and killed by the tens of thousands. Most of the victims were women, and almost all were from the lower range of the social pyramid (1974:206). Harris believes that the witch craze in Europe was occasioned by stresses emanating from the passing of feudalism, the emergence of strong national monarchies, the breakdown of Christian unity, the dispossession of the feudal serfs, and by shifts in population from the

countryside to the towns where a pauperized and alienated peasantry had to compete for employment in a wage-market economy (1974:193-194). Harris's conclusion is that the witch craze was created and perpetuated by Europe's ruling elites as a means of distracting the pauperized masses from focusing their collective attention to the actual sources of their problems, and diverting them from militant revolutionary activities (1974:202-207). By identifying diabolical "witches" as the cause of every conceivable evil and ill fortune, a corrupt clergy and rapacious nobility were made indispensable to the common good, and "emerged as the great protectors of mankind against an enemy who was omnipresent but difficult to detect" (1974:205).

But the following two American examples illustrate the fact that we must be wary of jumping to the conclusion that witch-fear is always a weapon of the strong to be used against the weak in stratified societies. Most Americans are aware of the Salem "delusion" of 1692. The mainstream "liberal" interpretation of this event has been that in Salem the strong and the powerful turned on the weak and the peripheral. This is the conclusion one could draw from reading Marion L. Starkey's carefully researched and well-written The Devil in Massachusetts (1949), although Starkey herself renounces moral indignation and embraces neo-Freudian psychology (1949:17). Even so, The Devil in Massachusetts shows evidence of having been written in reaction to the Nazi scapegoating of ethnic minorities, and ultimately to the genocide of World War II, in which conflict Starkey served as a member of the Women's Army Corps. The Crucible, Arthur Miller's (1953) play adapted

from Starkey's book, was an allegory that used the Salem incident as a means to condemn the evils of McCarthyism.

As well-meaning as these humanitarian and libertarian interpretations might be, the work of historians Paul Boyer and Stephen Nissenbaum (1974) has showed them to be inadequate to a full understanding of what went on in Salem Village in 1692. These men have defined for themselves an historical research strategy the principles of which parallel some of the most important tenets of cultural materialism. Boyer and Nissenbaum have discovered "the richness of the ordinary" (1974:xii).

> It is only as we come to sense how deeply the witchcraft outbreak was rooted in the prosaic, everyday lives of obscure and inarticulate men and women, and how profoundly those lives were being shaped by powerful forces of historical change, that . . . melodrama begins to take on the harsher contours of tragedy. (1974:xii)

Boyer and Nissenbaum found that the roots of the tragedy lay in the long-standing conflict between Salem Town, one of the most important commercial ports in New England, and Salem Village (later Danvers, Massachusetts), a rural farming hinterland (1974:35-59). More specifically, the witch craze was a product of the factionalism arising from the bitter rivalry between two area families: the Porters and the Putnams. The Porters were Town-oriented, with diversified interests in agriculture and commerce. Their faction opposed the ministry of Samuel Parris, the Village preacher in whose home the delusion originated. The Putnams were back-country farmers who found themselves out-maneuvered by the Porters in a series of legal conflicts that both antedated and followed the witch craze. The Putnams

were avid supporters of Samuel Parris, and their "intense, almost passionate, involvement . . . in pushing the trials forward is all too well known" (1974:115). The Porters were successfully adapting to the age of mercantile capitalism; the Putnams were failing to adapt, and the "witches" they indicted were found by Boyer and Nissenbaum to be those who were either on their way up, or on their way down the social ladder (1974:179-216). Most of those accused were "outsiders" in the sense that they lived beyond the bounds of Salem Village (1974: 190). Porter allies were imprisoned and killed during the witch mania, but the Porters themselves were too wealthy and respectable to be touched directly by it. The Porters weathered the storm, cut their losses, and prevailed.

> All our reading about the events of 1692 had prepared us to view the witch-hunters as a dominant and ruthless group that had taken the offensive against a set of weak and powerless outcasts. What we actually found, as the trials fell into a longer historical perspective, was something quite different: the witch-hunters may have been on the offensive in 1692, but it was a fleeting offensive--counter-offensive really--in the midst of a general and sustained retreat. Reading about the witchcraft trials without being aware of their pre- and post-history, as we came to realize, was somewhat like reading about the "Battle of the Bulge" of late 1944 without knowing that it was a desperate German counter-thrust in the face of a sweeping Allied advance--an advance which had begun half a year earlier and which would end a few months later in total German defeat. Similarly, the men and women who have gone down in history as the witch-hunters of 1692 were already in retreat by that time, and though it was a matter of years rather than months, they, too, would soon be defeated. (Boyer and Nissenbaum 1974:xiii)

As novel as these insights are in the exegesis of the Salem outbreak, they tend to confirm rather than challenge the interpretation I have given to witch-fear in general and windigo in particular in this dissertation. For defeat is terribly stressful, and it is to

societal stress that I have maintained we should look for the origins of witch-fear. It should come as no surprise, then, that witch-fear has developed among defeated segments of contemporary, urban American culture.

Madeline Leininger, a medical anthropologist and registered nurse, has received reports of nearly 200 U.S. witchcraft cases in a three-year period (1981:246). Leininger's studies focused primarily on four Hispanic U.S. families and two Anglo-American families (1980: 247,259), who had "shifted from a rural to an urban way of life," and experienced "economic stresses related to maintaining an adequate income to live in the city" (1981:248).

Leininger distinguished three phases in the course of a typical witch-fear cycle. Phase one was a period of "intense interpersonal conflicts which arose from identifiable social, economic, and acculturational problems" (1981:248). In phase two the family became "increasingly angry with and distrustful of one another and finally displaced their feelings and problems to a known outgroup" (1981:249). This "outgroup" was always composed of distant kinspeople or former friends with whom the "ingroup" had been on terms of social and economic interdependence before the displacement, but now felt was not helping them enough with their most urgent needs. "The third phase was characterized by intense ingroup-outgroup antagonisms and by identification of the bewitched victim, the witches, and the witch mediums" (1981:249). In this phase a scapegoat was chosen who was believed to have been bewitched, and who was held responsible for the existence of unresolved problems and conflicts facing the family (1981:248).

Among the social stresses that appears to be the most determinative of witch-fear, the inability to control one's destiny in vital matters seems especially important. By 1825 the Northern Algonkians had lost control over their lives. Unlike other groups of Native Americans who were able to channel their aggression outward against the European interlopers, the Northern Algonkians directed it inward. The works of Honigmann (1947), Carpenter (1953), Boyer and Nissenbaum (1974), and Leininger (1981), have shown us that witch hunting is not only a tool of the strong against the weak (cf. Harris 1974:178-207), but can also be an instrument of the weak against the weaker. Although the Northern Algonkian windigo complex falls into the latter category, it must be remembered that those executed as possessed by the windigo monster were not killed whimsically, but in order to increase the physical security of the executioners and the remaining members of the social group.

Although the particular manifestations of the Northern Algonkian stress response are specific to them alone, I maintain that windigo witch-fear has much in common with that of the Navaho, the Kaska, the Avilik, the Fore, the Salem outbreak, and Leininger's American cases. By the time windigo accusations reached their peak, the Northern Algonkians had been involved in the fur trade for more than two centuries. Trapping began as a supplementary activity that provided luxury European goods, but by this time most of these Indians were bound to the trading post by a system of debt peonage. Regional and episodic depletions of such important animals as the moose and the beaver results in widespread suffering (Bishop 1974, 1976, 1978). For the group I know best--the Northern Ojibwa--these depletions,

combined with an increased dependence on the trading posts, caused a shift in the basic mode of production away from big game hunting toward the capture of fish, small game, and whatever fur-bearers were available (cf. Rogers 1966; Rogers and Black 1976). This new mode of production put a premium on the labor of children, who could become net producers at an early age (cf. Mamdani 1973; White 1973, 1975; Nag, White and Peet 1978). Consequently there was a substantial rise in population among the Northern Ojibwa throughout the 19th century in the face of a deteriorating resource base (Bishop 1976:48; 1978: 225-226). This apparent paradox put even more strain on Northern Ojibwa society as the new mode of production and reproduction was intensified past the point of diminishing returns (cf. Boserup 1965; Harris 1977, 1980:188-192). European diseases took a terrible toll, and imposed special hardships on a semi-nomadic people who could not provide protracted nursing care to their sick. I contend that the windigo belief complex was the Northern Algonkian manifestation of collective witch-fear that is predictable in traumatized societies, and not an obsessive cannibalistic psychosis of individuals. Anthropology is obligated to contemporary and future Northern Algonkians, and to those committed to a science of history, to set the record straight.

Note

[1] In his textbook, Cultural Athropology, Roger M. Keesing reproduces a photograph of a Fore man who is apparently unconscious. The caption reads (1981:165; italics added):

> Fore vegeance. A Foreman lies brutally beaten by the relatives of kuru victim who have accused him of sorcery. *Often fatal* vengence against men suspected of sorcery compounds the catastrophic demographic consequences of kuru.

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Louis Marano was born in Buffalo, New York, in 1943. After graduating from Canisius College in 1966, he served three years with the U.S. Navy Seabees. He attended graduate school at the State University of New York at Buffalo from 1970 to 1973 and earned master's degrees in social science (interdisciplinary) and anthropology. In January, 1974, he began fieldwork among the Northern Ojibwa of Canada, and from 1975 to 1979 was involved in programs that delivered educational services to Northern Algonkian peoples on Subarctic reserves. From 1976 to 1979 he was lecturer in anthropology and native studies in the Brandon University Northern Teacher Education Project. After studying for a year at the University of Toronto, Marano came to the University of Florida, where he earned a Ph.D. in anthropology.

I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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